



THE LIFE  
OF  
ESTHER DE BERDT.

AFTERWARDS

ESTHER REED,

OF

PENNSYLVANIA.

*By Wm B. Reed.*

PRIVATELY PRINTED

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1853.







TO  
MY BROTHER,  
PROFESSOR HENRY REED,

This Memorial  
OF OUR COMMON ANCESTOR

IS DEDICATED,  
AS A MARK OF AFFECTION  
THE MOST EARNEST AND SINCERE.







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## INTRODUCTION.

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My motives in writing this volume are honestly stated in its first pages. It has been prepared (and this the critical reader will easily detect) at different times, and in the brief intervals of leisure which professional work allows. Its composition has been a source of enjoyment in contrast with the uniformity of my daily labour; and I can truly say that when the last page was written, I was very sorry that my literary recreation was at an end.

It is not as easy to define my reasons for printing what was thus written, especially as I have not adapted it in some respects to publication, having left it in the shape of a private memoir. But when my little enterprise was completed, it seemed as if I had worked in vain, were I to leave it in the fugi-



tive and precarious form of manuscript. The pride of ancestry, in its practical and American sense, no one need disclaim—I certainly do not ; and as my mind dwells on these memorials of patriotism, and self-sacrifice, and heroic endurance, I feel, not that I or mine are better for having such ancestors, but that the consciousness of having had them, ought to make me and mine far better than we are. In studying, as I have faithfully, these records of the past, I am humbled in my own estimation, at the prevalent inferiority in real, practical, American spirit, of the times we live in, to those so recently gone by. This sort of pride of ancestry, I repeat, I do not disclaim. It is at least an inoffensive and humanizing sentiment. A late anonymous writer has analysed the feeling in words better than any I can find. “Anything,” says an unknown contributor to the *Westminister Review*, “in the way of beauty should be welcome in matters of opinion. To have lineage—to love and record the names and actions of those without whom *we* could never have been, who moulded us, and made us what we are, and whom every one must know to have propagated influences into his being, which subtly but certainly act upon his whole conduct in the world—all this is implied in ancestry, and the love of it, and is natural and



good." This motive has tempted me to make permanent this little memorial of those who are gone before me.

I had other reasons. It is a contribution, or may hereafter so be regarded, to the historical literature of my native city and State. It records the acts of those who belonged to Philadelphia, and to Pennsylvania, the communities where my whole life has been past, that have honoured and trusted me, and which, with a full appreciation of their faults, I love and honour. If Pennsylvania and Philadelphia had always been true to themselves, to the great and good men who live in their history, recent and remote, and had not too often wasted praise, and adulation, and honour, on those who had but little claim to either, far higher would have been the fame of the community where our lot is cast. My little effort is now made to take from what I must yet call, "the dark unfathomed caves" of her history, some gems of which we may be proud hereafter. Within fifty miles of the spot where these lines are written, there are more Revolutionary battle-fields than in half the Union beside, and the domestic narratives—one of which I now venture to print—of Pennsylvania homes, from the forks of the Ohio to the banks of



the Delaware, contain illustrations of heroism and public virtue, which no State can surpass and few can equal. This local sentiment, as inoffensive as the other I have referred to, has also tempted me to this publication.

My work, I wish it again to be understood, is meant for private circulation.

WILLIAM B. REED.

Philadelphia, August 15th, 1853.



THE LIFE  
OF  
ESTHER DE BERDT.

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CHAPTER I.

1747-1764.

*A Private Memoir—Ancestry—Protestant Refugees—  
Birth and Education—Religious Sentiment—Ac-  
quaintance with Joseph Reed—Americans in London.*

THIS Sketch of the Life of one, the tradition of whose gentle virtues is affectionately cherished by her descendants, is prepared for those only who have a personal interest in the subject. It is meant to be strictly a *Private Memoir*. This ought to be distinctly borne in mind, should it hereafter, with or without my agency, be published. I make this explanation of my original design the more clearly, from no undue modesty as to what I have undertaken, which may have a wider interest than I



imagine, but because the motives and object of every literary enterprise, great or small, ought to be ingenuously and unaffectedly stated: it is fair to all parties,—the writer as well as the reader. The privacy of a personal memoir has many privileges. It admits of hearty and unreserved praise. It authorizes reference to personal and familiar details, suited only to the domestic circle, and revelations of private correspondence of no interest beyond the fireside for which they are made.

Such, then, is my object in an unpretending essay; to entertain and interest my immediate family, and to give to my own, my brother's and sister's children, a memorial of an ancestor, of whose pure domestic character,—the best of fame,—they have reason to be proud.\* I shall endeavor

\* As I write (February, 1847), my eye lights on a passage in the December number of the Quarterly Review, which, for fear it may escape me, I here copy.

“The high and holy duties assigned to women, by the decrees of Providence, are essentially of a secret and retiring nature. It is in the privacy of the closet, that the soft, yet sterling wisdom of the Christian Mother, stamps those impressions on the youthful heart, which, though often defaced, are seldom wholly obliterated. Whatever tends to withdraw her from these sacred offices, or even abate their full force and efficacy, is high treason against the hopes of a nation.”



to write it simply and unambitiously: for such a narrative ought to be, in the best sense of the word, "homely." It describes the career of an English girl, maturing into an American patriot woman,—a heroic and affectionate wife, proud of her husband's honest ambition, and in the end the victim of early death, accelerated by privations and sorrows, such as civil war so fruitfully produces. This, it will be seen, was the life and death of Esther De Berdt.

There is no difficulty in tracing the origin of the De Berdt family. They were French Flemings, who in the middle of the 16th century found refuge in Great Britain. They came from Ypres, and settled first at Colchester. De Berdt is very Gallican, and the Christian name, which in later generations has been Hibernicised into "Dennis," was originally written in the family "Denys." Happy was it for the lands whither they came, that these fugitives left their native country. I am of course unable accurately to trace the transfusion in England, though I have no doubt its effect there is clearly discernible; but in America, no stream of immigration has been purer and more beneficent than that which had its source in France, and especially in Protestant France. Even at this day, it



is most curious and agreeable to observe the effect of translation on the individual Frenchman; for while the masses, even under the fostering care of an indulgent monarchy, as in Canada, remain unimproved and unimproving, the French emigrant who comes to this country becomes at once a contented, exemplary, and prosperous American citizen. There is no better stock than that of the French and Flemish Protestants, whom the bigotry of Philip the Second in one century, and of Louis XIV. in the next, drove from their homes and places of reformed worship.\* It is that of the Hugers, the Petigrus, the Desaussures, the Gourdins, of our country; of the Romillys, the Barrés,

\* In 1845, I saw, amidst all the splendors of Versailles, the little confessional where, it is said, Letellier persuaded Louis XIV. to revoke the Edict of Nantes, and drive his best subjects into exile. Now as I write (April, 1848), Versailles is national property, and the last of the Bourbons has followed in the steps of the Huguenots, though with small claim to sympathy. In a note to Lady Hervey's Letters, edited I believe by Mr. Croker, I find the following fact stated: "In 1744, about 400 of the principal merchants in London presented a spirited Address to the King on this occasion—a threatened French invasion, in behalf of the Pretender;—but in looking over the names, it seems very remarkable, that full one-half were foreign: no doubt principally those of Protestant refugees." (*Hervey's Letters*, 1821, p. 48.)



the De Berdts, of England. From this stock of Continental Protestantism, came Denys or Dennis De Berdt, of the city of London, who at the time of his daughter's birth was a merchant largely engaged in what was then known as the American trade, and evidently, from the trusts reposed in him, and the tenor of such correspondence as has been preserved, a man of high character and social position. He was, during the American troubles, on terms of friendly and confidential intercourse with several members of the Government, especially with Lord Shelburne and Lord Dartmouth; and for a long series of years, in fact till his infirmities disabled him, represented the Colonies of Massachusetts and Delaware, the last then known as "The Three Lower Counties." These agencies, some details of which may hereafter be noticed, were posts of high responsibility. Mr. Burke and Doctor Franklin, as is well known, at different times were colonial agents. No one discharged his duties more faithfully and satisfactorily than Mr. De Berdt. His picture, in commemoration of the gratitude of Massachusetts, now hangs in the State House at Boston; and a piece of silver plate, in the possession of his descendants in England, attests the feel-



ing of another of his constituencies. It bears the following inscription :

To

DENNIS DE BERDT, ESQUIRE,

In grateful memory of his faithful services exerted successfully  
in obtaining the repeal of the American Stamp Act,

This Plate is presented, by the Honble. House of Assembly,  
of the Lower Counties on Delaware.

A. D. 1766.\*

These matters are here alluded to rather in anticipation of the regular narrative of his daughter's life.

Esther De Berdt was born in or near London, on the 11th of October, 1747 (O. S.) Of her character as a child and her early education, nothing is known. It is fair to infer, from her handwriting, which is ladylike and graceful,—her orthography, which, unlike that of many greater people of her times, was very correct,—and above all, from the

\* This piece of plate is in the possession of Mr. D. De Berdt Hovell, Lower Clapton, Middlesex. The Delaware records were destroyed during the Revolutionary War, and I have been unable to learn more of this testimonial than is indicated in the inscription, and in a letter from Miss De Berdt of 12th September, 1766.



general style of her correspondence, that her education, according to the standard—not very high, I admit,—of the times, was complete. It was that which the daughter of an English merchant of independent means had a right to,—one who kept his coach, and, besides his town house in Artillery Court, had his country residence at Enfield, a village not far distant from London, and which is not yet absorbed by the vast Metropolis. In all Miss De Berdt's letters, and they are numerous enough to authorize an inference, with none of the brilliancy which marks the feminine style of our day, there was a precision and clearness of language,—sometimes formal, and always inartificial,—which showed that the writer had read and been impressed by good models of English writing. The Spectators and Tatlers and Guardians were still current literature, not more remote than are Scott's Novels to the young ladies of 1848; and the Idler and Rambler, Thomson's Seasons, Hervey's Meditations, and Young's Night Thoughts, were the new books of the day. These letters of Miss De Berdt's will hereafter speak for themselves.

One element of her youthful character must be noticed. I mean her active, almost puritanical (this word, also, I use in its best and highest sense), reli-



gious feeling. Miss De Berdt's family, especially her father and mother, were earnestly pious. They were Dissenters, but of what precise shade of dissent, I have no means of ascertaining. Her girlhood was passed at a peculiar period of religious history, when the formalism of the Church of England had reached its extremest point—the days of hard-swearing, grace-saying, Church and State Squires, and fox-hunting Parsons—when enthusiastic religion, no longer persecuted but despised, lighted and watched its fires in humble dissenting chapels—the day when Wesley and Whitfield, with one of whom the De Berdts seem to have had some acquaintance, broke away from an establishment they had in vain sought to animate, or rather when the Church, by an error her wisest men have deplored ever since, allowed men of so wonderful energy and ability, to raise another alien banner, and rally round it the humble and the poor. It is, it seems to me, the worst and most unjust of follies, for us who live in days of comparative religious moderation and tranquillity, to judge harshly of the dissenting exorbitance of a century ago. Its enthusiasm was a living element, when animation was sorely needed. It was the necessary stimulant, at a moment of imminent collapse. The dissenting



Evangelism of 1750, like the Puritanism of a century before, did its work, and most important work, in its own good time. It is not a thing of or for our times, and no one now wishes to revive it, any more than we do to restore Puritan garments, or Puritan nomenclature. But let us write kindly the epitaph of sincere extravagance.\*

The active religion of the day, it seems to me, was with the Dissenters, or with the secluded and subordinate ecclesiastics of the English Church,—the curates and vicars, who mourned over the

\* I have authority for these opinions. Lord Mahon says (*History*, vol. ii. p. 391), "An hundred years ago the churchman was slack in his duties, and slumbered at his post. It was the voice of an enthusiast that roused the sleeper." And Archdeacon Hare (*Sermons*, p. 337) still more earnestly. Speaking of Baxter and the Puritan clergy of 1640, he says, "These pious men were driven from their pulpits; many of them had to endure cruel persecution. In a later age, when a spirit of literary and worldly lukewarmness had almost benumbed our theology, and when John Wesley lifted up his voice to admonish us that the temple of the Lord is an empty shell unless the Spirit of the Lord be dwelling in it, how easily might that large body of men who afterwards seceded from our Church, and in whom, if there was no little extravagance, there was also much fervor of faith, have been kept within our walls by judicious kindness; instead of which they were treated with overbearing scorn, and pains were taken to irritate them against us."



lapses and indifference of those in high places. In this atmosphere of ardent and unaffected piety, Esther De Berdt began her life. She no doubt breathed it with the ready susceptibility of a woman's heart, with the very chords of which, young or old, religion in some form naturally entwines itself. She saw in her aged parents, for she was the child of their old age, the efficacy of religion in guiding conduct. She loved them, and not the less dearly because they were sincerely, unostentatiously religious. Yet, withal, there seems to have been no tinge of exclusiveness, or harsh intolerance, but a gentle, diffident, devotional spirit, that is inexpressibly attractive. This estimate of her religious feelings, a careful and minute examination of the correspondence in my hands enables me to make. Among other original papers, is a small manuscript volume, without date, signed by her unmarried name, "Esther De Berdt," containing her private, maiden prayers or meditations, traced in her peculiar and delicate penmanship, and animated with the sentiment of active and gentle piety to which I have alluded, and which from first to last, as a girl and woman, in the trials of separation from the lover of her youth, at the grave of her little children, in the horrors of a civil war, when driven from home to



distant and uncertain refuge, and agonized at her husband's danger, and on her own bed of lingering disease and death, was the predominant sentiment of her heart.

This memorial, slight as it is, refers to a later period of her life, and is only incidentally alluded to now as giving some glimpses of her habits of early thought and conduct. It appears from this, as well as by allusions scattered through the correspondence, that Miss De Berdt's health was precarious: "God," she says, "has been pleased to afflict me with a feeble, disordered body,"—and the only picture taken from life that we have, a family group, represents her as slight in frame, with light hair, and fair complexion, and an air of sprightly intelligence and refinement. Her reading seems to have been of a serious cast,—Hervey, Watts, Shenstone, and Young, at the height of their peculiar and transitory fame, are the authors she cites by name. Her amusements and occupations were of a kindred and sober description. The theatre, —then far more attractive than ever since, Garrick being in the flush of his wonderful celebrity, and the dramatic talent of the day at work to give scope to his varied genius,—seems to have been prohibited by the discipline of Artillery Court, and



the recreations to which we find allusions in the correspondence, are bright and cheerful rural excursions to Cliveden and Hampton Court, and Windsor Park, which are described or alluded to as the moderate pleasures with which she was content. Thus passed her joyous and gentle girlhood.

I now come to that, which in her's as in every woman's life, was its great and controlling incident; that which determines destiny and influences for weal or woe what remains when parental guidance and protection end,—love for the husband of her willing choice, and father of her children. At the end of 1763, or beginning of 1764, Miss De Berdt made the acquaintance, probably through her father's business relations with America, of Joseph Reed, then a student of law in the Temple, —not, let me say, of that description of boyish students that we know of in American law offices, but one who, having finished his course and been admitted to practice at home, had gone abroad, as was then the fashion, to gain professional accomplishments in the mother country. Mr. Reed and his American companions seem to have been domesticated at Enfield, and in Artillery Court. Doctor John Morgan, the founder of the American Medical Schools, Mr. Samuel Powell, Stephen Sayre, Richard



Stockton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and Arthur Lee, formed the circle of American companionship, of which it is very manifest the heroine of my narrative was the attractive centre. Here Mr. Reed sought and won her, not from her home and parents, but under their roof, and with their passive acquiescence; won her to a new relation, which, as will be seen, when distress and ruin came, was to be the means of making her the mistress of a new and happy home, and of solacing the desolate old age of a widowed mother.

Mr. De Berdt peremptorily refused his consent to a connexion which would necessarily, on one side or the other, lead to painful separations. There are few English parents, even now, who would cheerfully resign an only daughter to an American lover, and one may easily conceive the extravagance of the pretension in days of colonial dependence and subjection.\* Even youthful passion, in its fresh disap-

\* Mr. Reed's letter of proposal is dated in September, 1764, and I find in the Gentleman's Magazine for April of that year, under the head of "American News," the following startling item:

"The accounts we have received of the massacre of the Indians in Pennsylvania, appear by a private letter from thence, to be not enough explained. If entire credit may be given to this letter,



pointment, could find nothing to blame in Mr. De Berdt's final decision, for such it was evidently supposed to be, and for a time it was submitted to, silently and hopelessly. But the young American had gained not only the daughter's affections, but the esteem and regard of the parents, who, in their anxiety to alleviate his sorrows, seemed unable or unwilling to exclude him from familiar companionship. The natural result occurred. It seems the appeal to a mother's sympathies had not been ineffectual, and the correspondence shows, that with a truly lover-like infidelity to all past protestations to the contrary, a secret engagement existed for several months, with all the romance, and some of the humiliating realities of such an intercourse. It was, however, too unsuitable to the honorable instincts of

the spirit of resentment that was manifested on that occasion was not appeased by the death of the poor Indians, but threatens even the whole body of Quakers, their protectors, who not manifesting a zealous inclination to carry on the war against the savages, are become equally obnoxious to the frontier inhabitants as the Indians themselves, by whom they are daily massacred. The danger to which these people are exposed, from continual incursions of the savages, renders them desperate, and unless some means is contrived for their security, it is feared they will attack the Metropolis, and shake the very foundations of the Philadelphia government, so firmly established in peace."



all parties to be long persevered in, and, in a short time, a new appeal was made by a sorrowing daughter to a kind father's heart, and his consent reluctantly given to an engagement, on the express condition that Mr. Reed should, if his presence were temporarily needed in America, return and live in Great Britain. How dimly and darkly was the future seen.



## CHAPTER II.

1764-1767.

*Correspondence with Mr. Reed in England—His return to America in 1765—Five years' Love-letters—American Disturbances—Stephen Sayre and Arthur Lee—Charles Townshend's Revenue Bill.*

I SELECT the following portions of secret correspondence on the part of this young girl, as illustrative of the struggle in a virtuous and unguarded mind, between the new affection that was taking root in her heart, and fidelity to other and sterner duties. They are, let it be recollected, the letters of a girl of eighteen,—simply, inartificially, naturally written.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

Nov. 1, 1764.

“This is the fourth time I have sat down to write to you; three times I went no further than to write



my letters half through. Once it was quite finished, folded up and directed, and now I think I am doing what is contrary to my father's will, and was he to know it, he would never forgive me. This has been one reason for my not giving you the former letters. Another reason is, I see it will lead you into difficulty; that if at any time you mention you still have an expectation of having me, he will immediately say that you would not entertain such expectations, or even distant hopes, without some encouragement from me. It must never be known that I ever gave you such encouragement, by writing a single line; so that I believe not only my parents, but every prudent person would say I'm now acting a wrong part. Besides, in spite of all my wishes, I see so many almost insurmountable difficulties, that my conduct seems more and more to blame, for as to my going to America, *it cannot be*. It would bring down the gray hairs of my dear and affectionate parents with sorrow to the grave. Indeed, it would be more than I could bear to leave them. You by several hints seem to mean that you could not live in England; you told my father that the trade in the law never was so dull as it is now: these things all tend to sink my hopes. Therefore, my dear sir, don't wonder at my not writing; but



you did misinterpret my meaning when I asked you on Friday what brought you to our house. I asked you because I wanted to know what excuse you had for coming to my father, and I am excessively sorry that it gave you uneasiness, for I am sure, did you know the motive, it would have given you pleasure. After all, I desire to follow the path of duty, and leave events to God; and the only thing you can do is, to wait the designs of an all-wise Providence, which, I doubt not, one day will make you happy; but I do not desire, and believe you do not, to have my chief happiness fixed on any creatures. To hear of your happiness will always give me pleasure, but more, if I ever have it in my power to share it.

Your sincere friend,

E. D. B.

Saturday night, or rather, Sunday morning.

As if distrustful of the chilling effect on her lover of the devotional sentiment at the close of this letter, she adds a postscript of a much more earthly tone.

P. S. Mamma being gone out, gives me a quarter of an hour that I can call my own. I devote it to you, to tell you that not having an opportunity yester-



day to give you this letter, I add a little to it; for now I've once begun to write, I may as well write a long letter as not, and so tell you the reason of my refusing your letter. Indeed, it was mamma being so nigh, and she turns round so quick sometimes, that there's no doing anything for her. I was vexed afterwards, as I saw it gave you uneasiness, but as I had a fine flow of spirits in the evening, and did not endeavor to curb them, I think you must guess at the reason, for I would not willingly do anything that should give pain to a generous breast. I don't know whether I should have wrote so soon if I had anybody I could speak to, but I neither can speak nor can I hear anything that is quite to my mind, for Captain Macpherson is never (here) but when my father or mother is in the way. You see there is self still which appears in every action of our lives; but I am fully persuaded, did the Captain know what would tend to my happiness, or give me the least pleasure, he would do it. I should be the worst of persons did I not retain a most grateful sense of the favors he has done. I am called away.

Monday morning.

It seems from the next letter, as if a lover's im-



portunities had somewhat softened the resolution  
“never to go to America.” She at least doubts.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

Dec. 8th, 1764.

Your surmise of my looking dull last Monday night was founded on truth, for really your letter on Sunday has given me the most sensible pain I have felt since you first wrote to my father, and though I endeavored to hide it, yet I found mamma took notice of it. The Captain asked me what was the matter, and my mind is anxious still, for my spirits flag insensibly when I think about going to America. My flattering hopes had raised me so high as to think you could find some way to make yourself happy in England. Indeed, you must try to find some other plan; for though my father's life is particularly uncertain, yet, I don't think it improbable that he should live long enough to see my brother apply to and be capable of carrying on a business which he has been all his life getting together for that end; now do you think it unlikely? Indeed I always thought that you intended staying here. Sure I did not raise my hopes without any foundation, for if at any time I perceived a hint



that looked otherwise, I imagined it was only what you should like, not what you intended; but maybe, had it not been for my wishing it so ardently in some measure blinded me, I should have taken more notice of those distant hints you sometimes dropped. I am afraid you will blame me in this respect, and still I hope you will impute it to the true cause, and then you'll rather pity me. But, my dear sir, is it impossible that you should stay here? To speak the truth, I dread an answer. Sure, Providence will point out some way to hinder the painful task of breaking the tie of friendship, so firm, so sincere as ours;—but why do I say friendship, for I believe that will ever last, though time should force us to swear off our love. 'Tis yours to know every sentiment of my mind. I've no other friend to whom I can do it with more pleasure and satisfaction, and my heart is so full of anxiety, that it must vent itself somewhere, and to whom can I do it better than into a bosom that entertains so honorable a love? But you will think I say too much.

I cannot help sometimes thinking that the Captain is right in his apprehensions of my father's secret thoughts in your favor; but then again a word is said which sinks my spirits. Still, I don't think they are entirely groundless, and though I can't form



the least idea what they are, yet I'm sure what they are *not*. I am sure it is not for me to go to America. I don't think you expect it is; but I have heard him say of you more than I ever heard (him) say of any other gentleman. "I love the man," was his expression, and I can assure you that's a great deal for him.

I should be very glad of half an hour's conversation with you, but am entirely at a loss to contrive it. I should be glad to know what way you think of, and I own, giving you pleasure will have a great influence over me, yet I won't promise that self shall have nothing to do with it. I was vastly dull last Wednesday before I came to Mr. Martin's, but whoever it was (you must guess) that was there, I found my spirits rise insensibly before I came away. I am sure Denny meant nothing when he said you used him ill. It was entirely a joke; indeed he gives me a vast deal of uneasiness, and I'm sure you'll do much better not to go with him to plays, and he will like you the better when he comes to consider, for he ought to obey his papa in such trifles as that. I wish he was not so fond of the diversions at that end of the town. But you know the worst of him, for if I can be a judge of him, he (does not) appear best when you first see him, but



when you know him as thoroughly as I do, he will improve on you, I hope. Mr. Powell drank tea here on Tuesday, and he gave me some very broad hints about you. I can't think how he got a notion about it. I am almost afraid my countenance betrayed what at present I would wish to have hid. If Providence has designed us for one another, may it kindly follow you, and constantly pour the greatest blessings it has to bestow on you: this will ever be the warmest wish of your most sincere and affectionate friend.\*

E. D. B.

/ Tuesday morning.

One other extract—a lady's postscript, however,

\* The young brother whose playhouse vagaries in the West End gave Miss De Berdt so much uneasiness, was Dennis De Berdt (the younger), afterwards a merchant in London, who died at an advanced age in or about the year 1820. Mr. Powell was Samuel Powell, of Philadelphia, an eminent merchant and mayor of the city, who died in 1793. On the day but one after the date of Miss De Berdt's letter, is the following in the *Historical Chronicle of the Gentleman's Magazine* for December, 1764; "Dr. Benjamin Franklin, known throughout Europe for his ingenious experiments in electricity, arrived in town from Philadelphia, in consequence of an appointment from the General Assembly of that province, to assist in transacting their important business for the ensuing year."



from a later letter, is all of this part of the correspondence that I shall venture on. It obviously relates to Mr. Reed's return to America, then near at hand.

“I had no opportunity to give you this on Sunday, but I am uneasy. What made you so dull? There seemed as if there was something that laid with particular weight on your spirits (Monday morning). Since I received your last letter, I imagine what made you so dull, but I dare say this will remove it. I am sometimes almost angry with my eyes, that they say so much; but why should I, since they only speak the language of my heart? In the former part of this letter, where I mention your settling in England, I don't mean immediately, for I am convinced of the necessity of your going to America. I do believe you are in love, for in your last letter you wrote Tuesday instead of Monday evening. I am quite ashamed of this letter, it is wrote so shockingly; but if I wait till I have an opportunity to sit down and write slowly and correctly, you would have reason to think I had quite forgot you.”

Happy was it, no doubt the lover thought, and



the reader even at this day will think so too, that the charming simplicity of natural letters like these was not spoiled by elaboration. A studied love-letter from man or woman is a very poor affair indeed.

On or about the 7th of February, 1765, the lover's farewell was said, and Mr. Reed sailed for America. In one respect only were the sorrows of separation alleviated,—Miss De Berdt's parents had consented to the engagement, and sanctioned their correspondence. In every other, the prospect was terribly unpropitious. Mr. Reed was returning to a scene of labor and anxious responsibility,—to meet and perform duties which required great and undivided energy. Misfortune was clouding the evening of his aged father's day, and infirmity had made sad inroad on a mind, which in its prime had been of great activity, and whose best resources and truest capacity had been devoted to the education of the son who was now to sustain and protect him in his decline. A large and helpless family was thus thrown for support on the young man; and nobly did he meet the responsibility—without murmur and complaint, and this too when his hopes and affections were, as we have seen, diverted elsewhere. It was his reward, at this period of gloomy and



dispiriting labor and anxiety, to be steadily cheered and sustained by the unfaltering fidelity of the young English girl, who at a distance watched his destiny. He had left England with every hope that his absence would not be long, and that, extricating himself from the ties which bound him to America, he should soon be enabled to return and live in the mother country. It was five years before his hope was realized, and then only to take his bride to her new and distant home in these wild Colonies.

The correspondence of this long interval is now before me,—five years' love-letters; and the doubt has not been trivial, how far, even at this remote period, when the grave has closed over the writers and the generation that succeeded them, it is right to violate the perfect and almost holy confidence in which they were written. There is an instinct that rather murmurs against it, and yet, when I read them—as I have again and again, singularly preserved as they are, for more than eighty years, and see the illustration especially of feminine character they afford, how in the simple garb of natural rhetoric, the pure sentiments of a woman's heart appear,—how true, how gentle, how intelligent she was—how ardently and trustfully she loved,—filial pride in such an ancestor is irrepressible, and I yield



to the temptation for the sake of those who share this pure inheritance (and for none others do I write) of letting them be seen and read.\*

The selections will be confined almost exclusively to one side of the correspondence, I mean to Miss De Berdt's letters, and this for obvious reasons. Mr. Reed's life and character have been elsewhere illustrated, though less in his private and familiar relations than I wished. But besides, I have no hesitation in saying that his letters are far less interesting—less worthy of preservation than Miss De Berdt's. The passionate letters of a repining lover are fit for but one eye; whilst the restraint which natural shyness and delicacy impose on a female's pen renders what she writes always graceful and attractive. It is very apparent in this correspondence. There are, however, not a few of Mr. Reed's letters marked by the precision and

\* The preservation of these letters, not one in the series being lost or mutilated, in this careless and manuscript-destroying age, has always seemed to me rather curious. It has strangely recalled more than once Cobbett's striking remark, quoted in Archdeacon Hare's *Guesses at Truth*, p. 268: "As your pen moves, bear constantly in mind that it is making strokes that are to remain for ever." The number of letters which are preserved is one hundred and eighty-three.



grace of style which distinguished what he wrote at a later period of life, the letters during the Revolutionary war to his wife and to his military and other friends, and which have been published in his *Memoirs*. Even when as a lover he wrote to Miss De Berdt on practical matters of mutual concern, his letters are good specimens of direct and manly epistolary style.

One other word of preliminary explanation is not inappropriate here. There will be found in this correspondence, incidental allusions to matters of public interest, which the reader who is familiar with this epoch of colonial history, will readily understand. It was just the period when the mistaken judgment of an honest but most misguided statesman, working in accidental unison with the perverse temper of an intractable political bigot, for such in every lineament was George III., young and old,\* began that career of folly which drove America to separation. It was the interval in which occurred the enactment of the Stamp Act—the fall of Mr.

\* A friend to whom I happened to express this opinion of George III., has protested against it as peculiarly harsh and unjust. I have given it full consideration, and cannot retract it. All history, and especially our history, sustains it. Paine was not far wrong when he called him the "Pharaoh of his times."



Grenville's Ministry, after it had done all its work of mischief, on the pebble-stone impediment of the Regency\*—the short triumph of Lord Rockingham's party, and the final catastrophe of Charles Townshend's Revenue Bill of 1767. Mr. De Berdt's commercial relations to America have been already alluded to. In 1765, his official connexion began, he being successively appointed agent for Delaware and Massachusetts. His post under the latter was an arduous one; his constituency having most ground of complaint, and being least disposed to suppress it; and the correspondence which has survived it is in every way creditable to his good sense, integrity, and active sympathy with his transatlantic clients. Thus it was that from a father's precept and ex-

\* In Lord John Russell's Introduction to vol. iii. of the Correspondence of the Duke of Bedford, he says, speaking of the Regency squabble which broke up George Grenville's administration: "Such were the causes which shook to its foundation a Ministry which had, unopposed and almost unperceived, carried resolutions for imposing stamp duties on America. The impolicy of a measure which made the first breach between Great Britain and her North American Provinces, sowed the seeds of civil war, and dismembered the empire, failed to attract attention, and in no way weakened the administration; but their want of regard to the Princess Dowager, and of liberality to the King, in a matter affecting his private comfort, destroyed their power. Such were the fruits of the Bute system."



ample, and in her very household, Miss De Berdt learned lessons which fitted her unconsciously for the duties and cares of an American wife. All the Americans at that time in London, excepting perhaps Dr. Franklin, whose name rarely occurs in the correspondence, were in the habit of visiting familiarly at Mr. De Berdt's house. Two of these who have been already mentioned, were individuals of peculiar and widely different careers and characters—Stephen Sayre and Arthur Lee. Sayre had come to England with Mr. Reed, having been his classmate at Princeton College, and having evidently, as a young man, conciliated his affectionate regard. He was, however, a volatile, untrustworthy adventurer, of extremely plausible address and attractive manners. Having become in 1765 or 1766 a partner in Mr. De Berdt's house, and thus gained some sort of position in London, he plunged into the vortex of politics and pleasure,—was on terms of intimacy with Wilkes and Charles Townshend,—wrote familiarly though deferentially to Lord Chatham,—dexterously praised his speeches to Lady Hester,—was elected sheriff of London,—contributed by his rash levity to the downfall of Mr. De Berdt's commercial credit—was committed to the Tower, and became a martyr of the minute on an



absurd charge of high treason preferred by a fellow-countryman,—and at last wore out the residue of a long and fruitless life in schemes of impotent and discreditable intrigues in England, on the Continent, and at home in America.\*

- Arthur Lee was a person of a very different stamp. He was an ardent and an able man, though with grave defects of character, of which not the least was a morbid habit of jealous suspicion and disparagement, that continually clouded his public conduct. Although born in America, he was from childhood reared in Great Britain, having first been an Eton boy, and then an Edinburgh medical student. In 1766 he began the study of the law in London. Then it was that he became intimate in Mr. De Berdt's family, and then too his activity in British American politics began, with the details of which every American student is, or ought to be, familiar. The opposition Peers patronised, and Junius grimly smiled on the young Virginian pam-

\* For a more minute account of Sayre's strange career, the reader is referred to Reed's *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 27. His arrest on a charge of high treason, in a plan to seize the King at noonday on his way to Parliament, is a grotesque incident in the history of dwarfish times. His accuser was a certain Ensign Richardson, a Philadelphian, whose story is told in Graydon's *Memoirs*.



phleteer. His brother William was Sayre's colleague in 1774 in the London Shrievalty, the strange spectacle being exhibited, on the edge of the Revolution, of two Americans, Lee, a Virginian, and Sayre, a New Yorker, holding this high municipal office in the metropolis. Of Mr. De Berdt, Arthur Lee has recorded a very high and kind opinion: "He is an upright, spirited, and independent old man, and therefore most obnoxious to Lord Hillsborough, who has made some mean attempts to injure him."\* With Miss De Berdt Lee corresponded

\* Letter to Richard Henry Lee, 9th November, 1769. *Life of Lee*, vol. i. p. 194. In Dr. Franklin's pamphlet of 1774, on the Proceedings in Massachusetts, he says: "Mr. De Berdt was appointed by the House only 7th November, 1765; he was admitted without the least question as agent by the Board of Trade, under different administrations, and Governor Bernard gave his assent to a bill for paying his salary so late as the year 1768. It happened to be the duty of the agent, soon after, to convey the complaints of his constituents to the throne, both against the Minister and the Governor. In this business, a faithful, honest agent was found exceedingly troublesome. Such representations were therefore made by the Governor, and such instructions sent by the Minister, as incapacitated the House from paying their agent, unless they would have one approved of by the very persons against whom it might be his duty to act. This measure needs no comment. It is not in human depravity to devise an act of more gross injustice than that of debarring men of the means of defend-



on terms of great friendliness ; and there is now before me a letter to her, very characteristic of the florid sentimentalism of the times, which thus concludes :

“Mrs. De Berdt, I suppose, gives you a profusion of politics ; but I must say something. Well then, tell Miss Edmonds that Sir George Saville is a prince of men ; he has called the House of Commons a set of scoundrels, for which he deserves to have his statue in gold. The Marquis will probably soon come in power, for the present ministry are tottering, and the leaders of the minority have united cordially together. So that Rockingham, Grenville, and Shelburne, must soon be in the Court Calendar.—Farewell ; commend me cordially to the best graces of the ladies of Belmont Row ; and lay me in the next chamber of your heart to that which Mr. Reed inhabits ; for I am most sincerely, Miss De Berdt’s

Humble servant,

ARTHUR LEE.

Tuesday.

ing themselves when accused, or of complaining when injured.” (4 Sparks, 504.) In a letter to his brother-in-law, in July, 1770, Mr. Reed says, “Lord Hillsborough has even descended to abusive language to Mr. De Berdt, and hates his very name.”



With these rapid preliminary explanations, I now return to the course of my narrative, and to Miss De Berdt's intercourse with her distant lover. Mr. Reed, as I have said, sailed from England in the early part of February, 1765, writing letters of affectionate farewell, successively from the Downs, Falmouth, and the Isle of Wight; while Miss De Berdt, whose health had become seriously affected, in company with her mother, went to Bath, then, and I presume yet, a place of fashionable resort. I shall copy but one watering-place letter—the first she wrote after her lover's departure.



### CHAPTER III.

1765.

*Correspondence continued—Plans for Mr. Reed's return to England—Commercial Difficulties—Mr. Reed's Illness.*

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

Bath, March 16, 1765.

Your setting out for America was attended with so many hindrances, that I question whether this letter will not just come at the same time with you. I hope it will welcome your safe arrival, and happy meeting with your friends, and that you will find everything better than we had reason to fear. If not, may you bear it with resignation to the will of Providence, and always remember that there is one who partakes, and by that means wishes to divide every misfortune that may happen to you. I am much obliged to you for your letters; that from Cowes was quite unexpected, for I had given up the



thoughts of hearing from you before July; and though I could not help being sorry you were detained so long, I felt a pleasing satisfaction at hearing you were still at so small a distance: but now, that thought I cannot entertain any longer, and I wish you may soon set your feet again on your native shore.

Here is nothing but diversion and gaiety, but a great many things are wanting to make me entirely happy—the two great things are, the company of three more of my much-loved friends, and the establishment of my health. You desire me to be particular about it, or else I should have passed it over, till I could have given you a more favorable account of it. We have been here a week, and I have not drunk the waters before to-day, for I have had a bad cough and cold, which has kept me at home, that I have not been at one of the public places, but I have everything to hope. I go to-night into the bath for the first time, and (my) next letter will, I hope, tell you that I am getting quite well. Mr. Powell is here; he behaves with much complaisance, but nothing more. . . . When I compare my situation at present, and what it was some months ago, when I had almost taken a resolution to desire you would not come to our house



any more, I think myself happy. What would have been the consequence of such a resolution, I know not. But now all such thoughts as seemed to deprive us of the hopes of happiness, are dislodged, and this, I hope, is only the rough part of the road which leads to pleasure. Mr. Wykoff is here, and they talk of his going to be married, but I don't think there is much in it. Mr. Powell goes for my humble servant at Bath; maybe, you will hear this in America; things do get about strangely. I imagine my father will write by this ship. Pray give my compliments to Captain Macpherson, and mamma's. I intend to show you that I think of you sometimes, for I am going to work you a pair of ruffles; therefore don't expect them till you see them, for I believe they will be a good while about.

We hear every week from my father. His letters would be looked on as love-letters rather than from husband to wife. That's the happiness I think the greatest, that after twenty years living together, to find the same complaisance, the same warmth of affection as at first. This happens so seldom that it really would make me enter such a state with fear and trembling. Do you want to hear that I still love? It's a truth which I am not ashamed to own, and at one time or another, to make it appear to all



the world. Never doubt this till I send you word.  
Your sincere and affectionate friend,

ESTHER DE BERDT.

Mr. Reed's first letter from America, where he arrived towards the end of April, brought the news of ruin and distress.\* She thus receives it.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

Enfield, June 28th, 1765.

Just as I was beginning to think the time long before I heard of you, I received your letter by the Packet. The pleasure I felt at hearing you was well and safe among your friends, balanced the pain I could not help feeling at the disagreeable news it brought. I own I was not surprised at it, as I was prepared. Indeed nobody was; they all seemed to expect it; and my good father, when he observed my uneasiness, in great measure removed it, by assuring me his regard was still the same for you, as I dare say you will find in his letters to you. All the concern I feel is for your family, and especially your good father. To think that he should be stripped

\* MS. letter to Miss De Berdt. Philadelphia, 25th April, 1765.



of his fortune when he most stands in need of it, of every convenience which affluence can procure, is terrible indeed; but I cannot help being glad you are with him. I think it must be the greatest pleasure he now can receive. The pleasure I should have in your company would be abated at the thought that you was so much wanted at home. So you see I endeavor to lessen my misfortunes by considering what good arises from them. . . . I hope you have dismissed from your bosom the thoughts of my forgetting you, and that those of a very different kind take their place. I should be almost angry with you for entertaining such troublesome guests, if I did not see by the date of your last letter, that you had been a month landed and not received any from me, which I wonder at, as I expected the first would have been there as soon as you. But I hope that long before now, you have had the pleasure of seeing by my letters that absence has not had it in its power to sever hearts so sincerely united.

I can't form the least notion what scheme it is that has been proposed to you, as I have not received your letter by Captain Davis. He arrived before the Packet or Budden, but only brought the news of the ship's being arrived. I am uneasy till I see them. What seems most likely is, that they



came too late for him, and if so they may come by the next York vessel. I puzzle myself to think sometimes what it can be, though I'm sure it answers no end. I can only wish, that whatever it is, it may turn out to your advantage, and that the sovereign hand of unerring Providence may overrule it to our mutual happiness. Several of my father's letters from different people mention your vast success in business. It gives me the greatest pleasure to think, that amidst it all, the friends you have left behind have so much of your attention and regard. I am sure they participate your pleasures—at least I answer for myself. Everything has yet exceeded our expectations, and yours can't be raised too high concerning every part of our family's steadfastness in their esteem for you, but you will (maybe) wonder when I tell you that your expectations are too high of me. I am sure you will not find me that charming creature you expect. Love must have blinded you, or you would have seen faults that would make you love me less. May you be always blind; but the least good quality I see myself possessed of gives me double satisfaction, as I think one day it may add to your happiness. Miss Edmonds and I correspond as frequently as usual. There is seldom a letter passes but you have a share



in it. Some circumstances made it necessary to tell them our connexion. Indeed it is no secret here, for most of my acquaintance tell me there is something of the sort going on ; and several families have every part of the story so exact, that it is not in my power to contradict it : the only thing I can do is to turn it off as a joke. Not one of the Americans has the least notion of it. Mr. Wykoff is to return home soon. He has seriously inquired of Mr. Powell if he had ever spoken to me or my father ; he told him he had, to both, so that I imagine he thinks he can assert the truth of that report. How little do they know my heart. No ; once dedicated, it is not easily changed. I know you love long letters, and I think you won't find fault with me, for I never wrote such long ones before ; but my pen don't seem willing to leave off when I once begin to write to you, and though my letters don't look so long, yet, remember the writing is small and close. I wish I could make this fly to you, as it would relieve you from a state of suspense, and satisfy you that we all entertain the same esteem of you as ever ; but I can't say how much I am, dear sir,

Your sincere and affectionate friend,

E. D. B.



How proud must the distant lover have been of such affection. The young girl who could write thus, was in every word giving assurance that she would be a cheerful and a cheering wife. She speaks slightly, we may imagine sadly, of Mr. Reed's professional success, for proud as she may have been of it, she could not but think of it as a new impediment to reunion in England.

The scheme alluded to was one of those plans of restlessness which, if consummated, are sure to be followed by disappointment and regret. It was, that Mr. Reed, abandoning his country and profession, should at once come to England and enter into mercantile partnership with his future father-in-law. He seized the suggestion with avidity, and wrote more than one letter to Miss De Berdt, setting forth in the most plausible colors the arguments in its favor. She too thought brightly of it, and wrote at once the following letter on the subject,—to my eye, one of the most characteristic of the series,—in which, as it seems to me, it is not hard to detect, aside from the ready hopefulness with which she at first adopts the idea, something like a reluctance that her lover, of whom she was so proud, should, even for her sake, relinquish a career for which his talents qualified him, and in which she was sure he



would reach high eminence. The sure instincts of a right-hearted woman—more trustworthy far on such questions than man's most deliberate wisdom—were at work unconsciously. Ardently as she wished to see her lover, serious as were the obstacles to her ever going to the country where alone he could attain professional success, she evidently recoiled from the idea of his being mere trading ambition. She feared he would regret his noble and intellectual profession—nay, that he might even repine at deserting his distant and relatively humble home. Young as she was,—and who can say how soon ambition so innocent springs up in a woman's heart,—she had cherished the ambition of being the wife of a distinguished man, in an eminent and learned profession, and shrunk from the haggard vision of mercantile perplexities, the bitter daily bread of a merchant's life—its poor honors and precarious rewards. All this, faintly shadowed forth, may be traced in what on the 8th of August Miss De Berdt wrote to America.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

Enfield, August 8th, 1765.

I had the pleasure of receiving yours of May 2d, only a few days ago. You see by my last it was



quite unexpected. I can't imagine where it has been all this time, as my father's of the same date came three weeks ago. It is a little unlucky the letter of most importance should be so long coming. I assure you I was agreeably surprised at its contents, for among all the schemes I thought of, that of your coming into trade never once entered my mind, which I wonder at, as so many circumstances seem to make it agreeable. I immediately told mamma, who is much pleased with it; you know it is what she always said would be the thing, and she now approves of it exceedingly. I have considered it thoroughly, and can see nothing that should make it disagreeable to any part of our family,—indeed the thoughts of it give me a great deal of satisfaction, and as to myself, I have not the least objection if you can reconcile your mind to it. What I fear is, you would still be hankering after your own profession, and that would make you unhappy. If you don't think that would be the case, it seems to me to be the most promising prospect of happiness, which would be doubled by the thought, that by our means the whole family would be made easy; as it would be likely to fix my dear brother for life, and relieve mamma from a great deal of anxiety, which you are sensible both she and I often have on



that account, and the thoughts of your return so soon and settling in England, separate from every other circumstance, I confess, would make me most earnestly wish it. Nor do I think being a merchant eclipses every shining talent. There certainly are many opportunities of displaying them, though I own there are but few who make any considerable figure. It would make me miserable if I thought the tender friendship and love which you entertain for me, and on which I set so high a value, should extinguish the nobler flame of ambition. The esteem which is kindled in my bosom is too refined to want you to live in obscurity, and I think this scheme which you propose will not lead to it, as it will make you known, and then (I speak from experience) the more valued in the world. . . . I shall write by Budden, if I have an opportunity, though I'm afraid I shall not, without I receive a letter from you. Remember, I have written eight, and have received but three from you. I do not grudge them you, for the greatest pleasure I can have in your absence is hearing from and writing to you. I have received a very obliging letter from Dr. Morgan. Indeed, I think myself much indebted to him; for, knowing it would give me the greatest satisfaction, he mentions your vast success in business, and the esteem you



get among all who know you, and seems happy that he has it in his power to give me pleasure. Those only, dear sir, who feel the sentiments of affection can form an idea how happy it makes one to hear those we love praised. It is commending one's own judgment, at the same time it gives us pleasure. This I have often experienced, and must thank your conduct for, which makes me still, with the greatest sincerity,

Your affectionate friend,

E. DE BERDT.

On the 10th, she adds a postscript, anticipating the adverse effect of the commercial difficulties which then were beginning to disturb the relations of the Colonies and the mother country.

I intended,—she adds,—this should have gone by the Packet, but missing that opportunity and waiting for Budden, gives me the pleasure. I have received your kind letter of the 17th of June. The sincerity and tenderness which runs through the whole of it, convinces me how rightly I have judged of your friendship. I always was persuaded it would prove as lasting as it was fervent, and I now indulge more than ever the pleasing expectation that



it will last for life, and mine is far from being abated by absence, for I daily see how worthy the object is on which it is placed.

I have written you my unreserved sentiments of the affair you mentioned in your letter of the 2d May. As trade is so perplexed, and in so hazardous a situation, I imagine you have given over all thoughts of it at present. You in America, as you feel the worst effects of the difficulties, are certainly most chagrined at them. We are in great hopes something will be done to relieve you, as Lord Dartmouth seems bent on taking some steps to undo what the late Ministry have done. I wish our expectations are not sanguine; but if they should succeed, and trade return again to its right channel, you may, perhaps, think again of your scheme; and I think that in that case there are many substantial reasons for it. But I would not desire you to act beyond your freest inclinations, and hope they will not carry you contrary to your judgment. May whatever you undertake prosper. Your happiness is so closely connected with mine, that I am influenced by whatever befalls you, and my heart exults with secret joy and laudable pride, too, at the thought how much it is in my power to soften your anxieties and add to your pleasures.



Sure, I need not be ashamed to own, it is much in your power to add to my comfort and happiness. I thank you for your kind solicitude for my health, and have the pleasure to tell you I enjoy it much better than when you left me, but cannot say I am quite well. My old complaint of the headache sometimes troubles me. You don't say a word about your own health. I will adopt your maxim, and suspect if you are silent. Mamma desires her kind love to you, and give our affectionate regard to Captain Macpherson and his family. Denny, also, desires his compliments to you. His esteem increases every day for you. He often wishes you were a merchant, though he says he would not spoil a good Lord Chancellor.

E. D. B.

The apprehensions hinted at in this letter, as to Mr. Reed's health, were realized, for the next news from America was, that he had been dangerously ill with a nervous fever, the fruit of fatigue and mental distress. Observe with what tenderness, checked only by a sense of religious duty, she now writes.



MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

Enfield, Sept. 19th, 1765.

A young man from the Jerseys told us he left you well the beginning of July, so that I could not imagine the reason of your not writing; but now every fear of that sort is vanished, and my whole concern is for your health. A heaviness hangs on my mind, which will not be removed till I hear you are quite recovered. I can't help thinking but I see your hand trembled when you wrote last. Everything alarms my fears on your account. I remember you had a fever just this time twelve-month, when you went your tour; and I well remember how altered you looked on your return. Indeed, God in his providence has seen fit to overshadow the morning of your life in a most remarkable manner. How much must I fall short of your expectations, for how incapable am I to help you to bear with resignation these strokes of adversity. Philosophy, too, will prove vain, unless it be of a religious kind, which influences the heart. May mine be thus influenced, and be able to say, God does all things well; this is what I would most earnestly wish for both you and myself, for certainly He has some wise and valuable end to answer by



all these things. I hope to have another letter from you soon, or else I shall be very uneasy. I am afraid you will be too forward again, and the violent heat of your summer, and so much business as you have on your hands, I fear will sink you down again; but I hope you will be careful of yourself, for my sake. My father and brother were both exceedingly kind and tender to me, for, without knowing each other's intentions, they told me beforehand not to be surprised at reading your letter, for you had been ill, but was better again, as they knew I had not heard of your sickness. You mention that you wrote by way of New York, and since that have relapsed, but I have not received any such letter. The news was quite sudden.—Do you give your heart into my hands with transport? I receive it, and shall always be proud to own it is my constant happiness to keep it in my possession, with every care it is perplexed with. I shall find a pleasure in endeavoring to lessen them. Since I part with my own heart (though it does not deserve so good a one in return), it would be hard to be a loser by the gift. I have been persuaded a long time I am not nor ever shall be. It is this that makes me write with so much pleasure and confidence, and is one of my greatest comforts.



Opportunities of writing have not offered so frequently lately as they did the beginning of the summer. I hope for the pleasure of writing again before the next Philadelphia ship. This has been the longest seven months I ever spent in my life. It is just about so long since you went away. You need have no fears of my father's losses in America affecting his esteem for you. He shows it in many instances, and especially by his care of your religious and moral character, which he often expresses with the greatest affection, and is frequently saying he hopes you will not suffer in that respect. It gives me the greatest pleasure to hear it, as it appears like the tender concern of a father. He will certainly, I am afraid, lose a good deal of money this year in America. You will see he is much displeased with Mr. Rogers's conduct, and I can't help thinking but he has great reason.

I should be glad to know who nursed you in your sickness. If you was at a friend's house, I should like to know to whom I owe my thanks for their care, which I shall do in my own mind, though I can't do it openly;—or whether you are in a house of your own, though I hardly think you know what to do in one, only yourself. I heard you had taken your brother Bowes into your office to study law. I



hope it will answer, as I have concern for the prosperity of every one connected with you.\* . . . It would be ungenerous in me to complain, as everything is done to make me easy, and I shall be so when I hear you are recovered again. I hope there are still some great blessings in store for you, and after so many difficulties and perplexities you will taste the more sweetness in them; and it may, perhaps, be my lot to be one of your comforts, and share in the rest. God only knows if our wishes will be crowned with success. Your illness dejects my spirits, as it undermines the foundations of my hopes: but by this time you may be quite well and about business again. I own it is foolish to forebode misfortunes; *that* I endeavor much against, and still hope the best,—nor would I repine at the hand of God, or murmur against Heaven; but yet, a thousand anxious fears will arise, and it is impossible to help it when so dear a friend is concerned. Mamma desires her affectionate regards to you, and says she does not know which she loves best, you or her own children.

Your most affectionate friend,

E. DE BERDT.

\* Mr. Bowes Reed was Mr. Reed's own brother. He was the grandfather of the present Bishop M'Ilvaine, of Ohio.



## CHAPTER IV.

1765-1766.

*Correspondence continued—Repeal of the Stamp Act—Rockingham Ministry—Mr. Reed's Letters from America—Debates in Parliament—Petition of the Stamp Act Congress—Mr. Pitt's Speech.*

HER next letter, a few months later, shows that the ill-conceived plan of Mr. Reed's entering into trade was abandoned. The letter has some allusions to public and local affairs, of which she writes intelligently and unaffectedly; and its date is coincident with the brief period between the passage of the Stamp Act and the formation of Lord Rockingham's first Ministry.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

London, November 9th, 1765.

Under the influence of a thousand gloomy and anxious fears, I was just going to write to you, and I received your kind letter by way of Ireland.



None but those who feel the same sincere friendship, can tell the pleasure it gave me to hear your health was likely to be re-established; and another letter to-day has made me quite easy on that account. I think I never prized any letter more that I have yet received from you, for it is two months since I heard from you of your bad state of health. Indeed, I had one since, but it was of a much earlier date than the one I answered a few weeks ago, and it only gave me the most discouraging accounts both of your health and difficulties, which sunk my heart in the tenderest concern and solicitude, and it would often appear in spite of all my efforts to conceal it. But now I am happy in the thought of your recovery, and in finding too that your usual flow of spirits is returned again. May you always and constantly receive every blessing a kind and indulgent Providence can bestow, is my most earnest prayer; and if we should be so favored as to spend our lives together, I hope it will be for our mutual happiness, and to bring honor to God. We are now returned to London for the winter. I came with much regret. It brings to my remembrance scenes of pleasure which I cannot taste. There is constantly something happening that brings you fresh to mind. Every



Sunday I still seem to expect you to dinner, and I have not yet been able to keep up my spirits as well as usual on that day. But I will not say any more of this; I shall make you dull, as it sometimes makes me pensive: but this is as true, that my esteem is not at all abated, and will still live and flourish, though all the chilling frosts of adversity should conspire to destroy it. You tell me I must forgive your impatience, and you must in return forgive me if I sometimes express fears which rise in my breast and cloud my hopes and expectations. . . . I don't wonder at your dropping the thoughts at present of coming into trade, for it really is in so bad a situation, that those who are in would gladly resign if it were in their power. I do not think it can grow worse. . . . We are surrounded with Boston men, who are so hot about these new regulations, that we have heard of little else for a long time. Indeed we have a great many calamities. The Duke of Cumberland's death, it is thought, will make some alterations for the worse in state affairs, but we know there is an overruling Providence, which orders all things for the best. Yesterday, there was a most dreadful fire in the city at the bottom of Cornhill, where the four streets meet. All the four corner houses were on fire at



once. It is said that about one hundred houses are burned down, and a great many lives lost of many families, all but one poor little child are yet missing. Mr. Burnit has a cousin burnt out. The wind blew very fresh, and one house fell upon the main spring of water, so that it was a long time before the engines could get supplied. What a mercy it is to be kept in safety while others are plunged in ruin and distress.\* I am pleased that Mr. Pettit is with you, as it must be a relief in many things which otherways would have laid much heavier. I wish Mr. Pettit may succeed in everything he undertakes.† I feel much for them, and shall always be glad to hear of the welfare of any of your family. You will see by my father's letter what likelihoods there are of any alteration in American affairs. He does not know of my writing to you now, but I am persuaded I give and know I take so much pleasure, that he must pardon me if I transgress the limits he has prescribed. . . . I wish I could tell you my health was perfectly restored, but it is indifferent, though

\* The Duke of Cumberland, the King's uncle, the "Butcher" of Culloden, died suddenly on the 13th October. A minute account of the fire mentioned by Miss De Berdt will be found in the Annual Register for 1765.

† Mrs. Pettit was Mr. Reed's half sister.



I am still much better than when you were in England. I am rather grown fat. This day last year saw me much happier. Don't you remember seeing Lord Mayor's show by water, but I (illegible) you to say no more of what has been of this sort. Next (illegible) we may see it together again. This is a most pleasing thought. Mamma desires her best regards to you, and believe me to be, with unaltered esteem, my dear sir,

Yours sincerely,

E. DE BERDT.

Let me here depart from the rule of exclusion, which I had prescribed for myself, by inserting one letter from Mr. Reed, in reply to Miss De Berdt's of November, in which he describes his domestic situation, and the heavy responsibilities under which he was cheerfully laboring. The commercial scheme still, though feebly, lingers in his heart.

MR. REED TO MISS DE BERDT.

Trenton, January 13th, 1766.

MY DEAR HETTY:

I catch at this opportunity, of which I am just apprised, to thank you for your dear favors by Sparks and Robinson. The tenderness they breathe



would have made me well if I had not been so before; but I have been long since perfectly recovered, and I can now (think) of your tender concern for my health with no other emotion than the pleasure of being the object of your pity and regard. My illness lasted a good while, though I never thought it a dangerous one, and since it has left me I think I have enjoyed a higher degree of health than ever. But were it not for the concern it gives you, I could almost consent to be sick again, since it has induced you to unbosom yourself with more freedom, and placed a confidence in me which is the pride and pleasure of my life.

I find several letters which I have written by the way of Ireland have not reached you. In one of them I described my situation as to family in such a manner as would have saved you the trouble of asking who nursed me. I have been, much against my inclination, obliged to keep house ever since my return, and you will perhaps be surprised when I tell you that my family consists of nine persons besides servants,—but, so it is, and I have been under the unavoidable necessity of supporting all these, besides my father, who chose to retire into the country, where he still continues. My sister Pettit is very dear to me, notwithstanding she is but my



half sister, and has been the cause, though an involuntary one, of all my misfortunes, and as the recollection would do no good, I have endeavored to behave to her with the same tenderness as though they had not happened.\* As there were no opportunities for Mr. Pettit to put himself in business in Philadelphia, and he had a prospect of doing something in Nova Scotia, he went there last summer, and my sister with three children came up to live with me. He returned a few weeks ago, and they and my two brothers and sister make no inconsiderable family. How long this will continue I cannot say, but I hope not longer than next spring; but if Mr. Pettit should go to Nova Scotia with his family, or otherwise provide for them, there will still be four of us, and I think it most likely I shall continue to keep house, as my sister is past fourteen, and prudent beyond her years; but I am yet far from being determined on this head.†

I have taken my brother Bowes into my office, as I had no other way of providing for him, but I have no expectation of his making a great figure,

\* Mr. Pettit had been unfortunate in commercial business.

† This was a younger and only own sister, *Mary*, who died unmarried in 1785, having outlived both Mr. Reed and Miss De Berdt.



and it was only because I could do no better. My uncle has it much in his power to assist me, but he has left me hitherto to struggle with my difficulties as well as I can. However, my income I believe would have been equal to them all if the Stamp Act had not interfered. This has hurt me prodigiously, and exhausted all the little store my first success had given me. I hope for better times, and with this keep up my spirits as well as I can. As to my former scheme, while I am absent from you I shall always be fond of it, for it is impossible that anything can ever be more desirable to me than an opportunity of once more seeing my dear charmer, and anything that flatters these wishes will lie very near my heart; but you know even my warmest desires to bring this about could not effect it without the consent of many who may have insuperable objections, and, indeed, I fear it would be entering into a dependency that might be uneasy even to yourself, but the joy and happiness of calling you mine, and being united with you for ever, so far outweighs every other consideration, that I dare not pretend to judge what is most proper or convenient.

From this time forward, and more especially



during the year 1766, when Mr. De Berdt, as Agent for the Stamp Act Congress, and for several Colonies, was brought in direct relation to public affairs, and to men in office, the correspondence is filled with allusions to political matters, and to the varying phases of the pending dispute between the Colonies and the mother country. The following extracts from letters of Miss De Berdt and her father, during this year, are historically curious. It must be remembered throughout that it is a young woman, and not a politician, who is writing,—one who hears and repeats the echoes of her father's house.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

London, 7th of February, 1766.

You will see by my last letters the plan that was then only thought of about our good friend Sayre. It is now so far concluded as the situation of affairs will admit. I dare say it will give you pleasure. It depends on the removing the difficulties you labor under in America, for nobody can think of entering into trade when there is no prospect of anything to do, and my father has deferred mentioning it, till affairs are a little settled, which cannot be long now. The House of Lords are most



your enemies. There were but five who voted for your right of taxing yourselves. One of them was Lord Chief Justice Pratt, though most of the gentlemen of the law in the Commons were on the other side of the question.\*

\* On 4th of February (misdated 15th of January), Mr. Pitt wrote to Lady Chatham one of the charming familiar letters that brighten his more stately and formal correspondence.

"Bond Street, 12 o'clock, January 15th, 1766.

"I am just out of bed, my dearest life, and considering the great fatigue—not getting to bed till past 4,—I am tolerably well, my hand not worse, my country not better. We (number three) debated strenuously the rights of America. The resolution passed for England's right to do what the Treasury pleases with three millions of freemen. Lord Camden in the Lords *divine*, \* \* but one voice about him. They divided: we did not. Five lords—the division, Camden, Shelburne, Paulet, Cornwallis, Torrington. I am not able to attend again to-day, when more resolutions are to be moved. It is probable the main question of Repeal will not come on till Friday or Monday. Send the coach, my love, to-morrow morning, and I shall then have it in my power to do as events allow. At present, adieu! Kiss our dear babes for me.

"Your ever loving husband,

"WILLIAM PITT."

The favorite countersigns of the "rebel" army at Cambridge, were the names of opposition Peers. I have before me an origi-



We have many doubts about the repeal of the Stamp Act, as Lord Bute is determined to try all his weight against it, because Mr. Pitt is for it, and I assure you we are in as much anxiety here as you are in America, for the manufacturers are ripe for tumult, and that is really the most favorable circumstance that could happen.\* I mention these circumstances as I think you will like to hear on what point things turn, and perhaps Papa may not

nal page of the Orderly Book, with Washington's autograph countersigns for several days in August, 1775,—“Yarmouth, Arlington, Bedford, and Torrington.”

\* About this time Lord Chesterfield—always a good friend to America—thus pleasantly wrote to his son.

“You will probably wonder that I tell you nothing of public matters; upon which I shall be as secret as Hotspur's gentle Kate, who would not tell what she did not know; but, what is singular, nobody seems to know any more of them than I do. People gape, stare, conjecture, and define. Changes of the Ministry or in the Ministry are daily reported or foretold; but of what kind, God only knows. It is also very doubtful whether Mr. Pitt will come into the Administration or not. The two present Secretaries are extremely desirous that he should; but the others think of the horse that called the master to its assistance. I will say nothing about American affairs, because I have not pens, ink, or paper enough to give you an intelligent account of them. The repeal of the Stamp Act is at last carried through. I am glad of it, and gave my proxy for it.”—Vol. iv. p. 420.



be quite so particular, but if it should be what you hear by everybody, you must remember that it was my intention to tell you more than anybody else. Mr. Sayre is thinking many ways of opening a way for your coming to settle in England; and we have some few pleasant hours in talking of them. None are yet well grounded enough to tell you of. None but those whose esteem is as fervent and sincere as mine, can tell the different emotions of my heart when one scheme appears promising and then some circumstance comes in and dashes all to the ground again. I am persuaded your inclination is to embrace any opportunity that should offer, that appeared favorable, but this is my fear sometimes that you would not be happy, unless you had a preference in your business here as you have in America, which thought, I confess, gives me many a pensive hour. Forgive me, my dear sir; it arises from the most tender concern for your happiness, which lies near my heart.

In the early part of March, 1766, the Stamp Act was repealed. The news was carried to America by the brig *Minerva*, Captain Wise, a vessel chartered especially for the purpose by Mr. De Berdt and the other Agents. It bore also the following



private letter to Mr. Reed, written on the day of repeal.

MR. DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

London, March 18th, 1766.

DEAR SIR—

I doubt not but this will be welcome to you on more accounts than one, especially as it brings you an account of the complete repeal of the Stamp Act, which we send by a vessel hired on purpose to ease the minds of our friends in America as soon as possible, by a general letter to each Province. I hoped it might give you some weight in the Province to have a particular letter by the Merchants' Express, which also gives me an opportunity of immediately answering yours of the 13th January, per Packet. . . . I am very glad to hear your health is restored, which will better enable you to bear the burthen Providence at present lays upon you. . . . I am glad to hear what I wrote pleases my friends. I wrote it in the sincerity of my heart to serve them, and your showing it prudently does me honor; but some letters I have sent to New York have been imprudently printed there in the News, which coming back here may give offence, and thereby weaken my interest. I have much money locked



up in America. To you, as a friend, I may say £50,000, that more business till that circulates would only embarrass me. If I can be publicly useful in the last stage of life, it will be a peculiar pleasure to me. I have pursued your affairs with all my might, and think myself very happy that I introduced the Congress Petition before the House without offending the Ministry, notwithstanding the Congress itself was deemed illegal, which had its full weight by Mr. Pitt's taking it up, and declared that the greatest defect he saw in it was that one of the petitioners' names was "OLIVER:" but Denny wrote you the affair at large as I had not time.\* But I

\* I very much regret that this and other letters at this time from the younger Mr. De Berdt are lost. The allusion in the text to Mr. Pitt's speech on the Congress Petition of 1765, is all that has survived, even as a tradition of that occasion. It probably was the debate of the 21st January, on American Papers. "No report," say the editors of the Chatham Correspondence, "of Mr. Pitt's speech on this memorable occasion has been preserved," and it was after it that Lord Charlemont wrote to Mr. Flood, "Heavens! what a fellow is this Pitt! I had his bust before; but nothing less than his statue shall content me now." (2 Chatham Corr. p. 390.) Is it not strange that the only fragment of a great Parliamentary oration, should be thus accidentally preserved. The "Oliver" of Mr. Pitt's allusion, was "Oliver Partridge," a member of the Stamp Act Congress from Massachusetts. There was



have wrote you several letters from time to time, which, as they are received will relieve you. *Though when you are warmed with gratitude, be not so forward in raising money on any occasion but that of a new war, which, in my opinion, may not be at a great distance.* We have every year such encroachments and broils about the Fishery. I thank you for your hint about Nova Scotia. It is in general a bleak, barren country, but shall judge of that when you write more fully on that head. I wish in return I had influence enough in America to procure you a good Agency, for it is generally thought your friend Mr. (Jackson) will resign. You shall have the advice, weight, and influence of

Yours truly,

D. DE BERDT.

much spirit as well as sagacity in that part of Mr. De Berdt's letter in the text which I have italicised. Lady Hervey, in a letter of 20th March, 1766 (Letters, p. 313), says, "Mr. Pitt's famous speech the first day of the meeting this session (which I hear was the finest thing that could be) has disoblged all sides, because he, Almanzor like, attacked all sides most vigorously, and what they call, *gave them their own*, which few like or indeed have reason to like. His opinion about the power of taxing the Colonies seems to be peculiar to himself and Lord Camden."



## CHAPTER V.

1766.

*Plans of Agency in England—Lord Dartmouth—Stephen Sayre's Letters—Charles Townshend and William Kelly—Letter to Lord Dartmouth—Visit to the House of Commons—Pitt, Townshend, Grenville and Wedderburne—Correspondence—Richard Stockton—American Sinecures.*

THE allusion at the end of the last letter to a colonial agency for Mr. Reed, refers to another plan of the lovers and their friends to enable him to return to England, and which, like that of coming into trade, was happily frustrated. His American destiny was not to be thwarted. It seems to have been supposed that Mr. Reed might come out as an assistant to Mr. De Berdt, should Massachusetts put her Agency on a permanent footing, or secure a separate Agency for himself. The official influence on which Mr. De Berdt most relied was that of Lord Dartmouth, a Lord of Trade under the Rockingham



Administration; whilst Stephen Sayre, then, as ever, bustling and busy, and who recently had become a partner in Mr. De Berdt's commercial house, was calculating as confidently on the patronage of Charles Townshend, at the height of his brief and brilliant Parliamentary fame, and who soon after became, unhappily as it turned out, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

William, second Earl of Dartmouth, held office as the first Lord of Trade but for a short time, and, as will be seen, refused to continue under the next Administration, because they neglected or refused to create for him a new department or secretaryship, especially devoted to American affairs.\* He seems to have been an amiable and religious man, with strong sympathies with the dissenting interest. Frequent references to him will be found in Lady Huntingdon's curious Memoirs, for he was one of her ladyship's staunchest friends, and his piety, the sincerity of which there is no reason to question, was the natural object of the gibes and sarcasms of scoffers, such as Walpole and Rigby. It was the day when the court permitted a buffoon to caricature good men because they were Methodists, but promptly

\* His letter on this subject to Mr. De Berdt, will be found in Reed's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 46.



interposed to shield a licentious Duchess when she became the ribald's target. A religious public man like Lord Dartmouth, in such times has a poor chance of fame. Americans, however, should, in a measure at least, cherish it. He was a friend of their cause when friends were few.\* Charles Townshend's

\* Cowper alludes to Lord Dartmouth in his table talk, "Truth:—"

"We boast some rich ones whom the Gospel sways,  
And *one* who wears a coronet and prays,  
Like gleanings of an olive tree they show,  
Here and there one upon the topmost bough."

The most minute particulars of the Earl of Dartmouth are to be found in *Lady Huntingdon's Life*—a book easily ridiculed by those who read to ridicule, but which is full of curious and valuable materials (vol. ii. p. 32). Foote's farce of "The Minor" was represented with great success, being levelled at Whitfield, while the notorious Duchess of Kingston had influence enough to suppress a satire directed at her (Id. vol. i. p. 209). Every reader of Horace Walpole remembers the description of the religious service at the Magdalen House (Id. vol. iv. p. 20), in which Lord Dartmouth is grotesquely introduced. Mr. Rigby, in a letter of 5th August, 1765, to the Duke of Bedford, says: "Their (the Rockingham) Board of Trade, it is said, is not yet fixed, except Lord Dartmouth for its head, who, I don't hear, has yet recommended Whitfield as Bishop of Quebec." (Bedford Correspondence, vol. iii. pp. 222, 313.) I have thrown together these scattered references to Lord D., as his name frequently occurs in the letters which follow.



fame and character every one knows. He was rather the acquaintance of Stephen Sayre than of the De Berdts.

The following extracts of letters from Sayre to Mr. Reed, the writer having in the summer of 1766 come to America, on the business of the house of the De Berdts, are in some respects curious. It would seem that Mr. Townshend and some of his friends had become, or were willing to become, interested in American land speculations. The allusions are unintelligible, and the more so as the writer was a boastful and very untrustworthy person.

STEPHEN SAYRE TO MR. REED.

Boston, 19th June, 1766.

MY DEAREST FRIEND:

I now have the pleasure of acquainting you with my arrival after a most agreeable passage (except in point of society, which was very indifferent). As I have not yet been two days in this place, I can't give you any further account of it than what appears to the eye, which is agreeable enough. . . . I have a thousand things to talk of when we meet; at present you must excuse me, and rather attend



to business. I know you don't want inclination to serve your father-in-law, but perhaps you can't conceive how difficult it is just at this time to support credit as it ought to be, and most of the money due to the old partnership is in Philadelphia, where they are, beyond example, remiss in payment. It really appears that many of our correspondents don't seem even to think of anything more than ordering goods. They have, for some months past, been unable to make any considerable remittances, which I suppose will be the case yet longer, otherwise you would have now seen me in that province; but as it is vain to press hard upon inability, I thought it would be time enough to be there in the fall or winter, by which time they will collect a little Spanish silver. Some other inducement suggesting, such as the probability of making some new acquaintances who were in the fishery, and consequently have a good remittance in their hands, &c., prevailed upon us to my embarking for this province.

You may venture to assure our friends, not only that Mr. De Berdt himself, but your humble servant, have been most assiduous in their application for relief in all our commercial interests, and though we are out of expectations of seeing anything take place this year, further than that of



lowering the duty on molasses, yet we have made so many of the people in power masters of our grievances and true circumstances, that we have good reason to expect great relief. I claim to my own share the whole merit of opening Dominica as a free port, which, upon the arguments I have made use of, was at last considered as a laudable measure, and upon due consideration was adopted so far by the Committee of Merchants, that they brought evidence to the Bar of the Commons, who made it demonstratively clear that it was absolutely a most advantageous regulation. Mr. Charles Townshend made a noble and spirited speech in favor of it, but by the disjointed, unstable situation of the Ministry, that, with many others, is likely to pass over for this year. I am lately become a great favorite with Mr. Townshend: he has very particularly desired me to keep up a constant and steady correspondence with him while in America, that he may be furnished with materials and all necessary measures to be taken for us, which, he says, he hopes to support with more steadiness than we may expect from his character. I have his order to purchase lands for him in the province of New York, and I am convinced nothing can serve our interest so effectually as making some of these



people of influence proprietors of some of our lands. You see my sheet is full. My next may be more particular. Pray write to me immediately; direct to me at Mrs. Weatherhead's, near the King's Chapel.

MR. SAYRE TO MR. REED.

Boston, 3d September, 1766.

I received your letter last night, just in time to convey such arguments to Mr. Townshend as it afforded me, and hope he will be induced to make some purchases in that province, for apparent or real interest has as much weight with him as any man I know of. I am glad to hear you say, you would make the first attempt to settle the Niagara tract, provided we had the grant for it. I had wrote so to Mr. Townshend upon mere presumption, desiring him to include Mr. De Berdt and ourselves in the patent. I wish you could, by some friend, bring in Sir William Johnson, to take a share, for his interest with the Senecas would facilitate everything here.

I have wrote by this post to New York to Mr. Kelly, who is more particularly acquainted with Mr. Townshend than I am, for he dined constantly



at his table while I was in England. He really was very serviceable in our difficulties, and chiefly biassed Townshend in so vehemently trimming Mr. Grenville upon making that motion in the Commons to petition his Majesty to enforce all laws, etc. ; for the motion was overruled chiefly by Townshend, which caused Mr. Pitt to say, that had he known Townshend stood on that ground, he should not that day have come to the House ; and I assure you I can't say enough in praise of Kelly in those matters, and I have desired him to write to Sir William about it. If Kelly will recommend it, I answer it will stimulate him to prosecute the affair. I am very friendly with Kelly, who expresses vast regard for me. We happened to agree most exactly in our ideas of trade, long before we became acquainted.\*

\* In one of the many pamphlets which, in this year (1766), were published, on Mr. Pitt's accession to the peerage, is one entitled "*A Short View of the Political Life and Transactions of a late Right Honorable Commoner*," in which, at p. 67, is the following reference to Mr. Kelly and Charles Townshend. I copy it here, as the tract is rare. After praising in very strong terms Mr. Townshend for his active exertions in procuring the Repeal of the Stamp Act, the writer says : "Mr. Townshend had conversed with the most intelligent well-wishers both to the mother country and the colonies ; his materials were admirable, and those who



The only other letter on public affairs is one from Mr. De Berdt to Lord Dartmouth, on his retirement from office in August, 1766. It has all the characteristic earnestness of the old gentleman's peculiar style, and is in answer to one published in Mr. Reed's Memoirs.\*

have ever heard him speak need not be told what an additional force they acquired from the exquisite coloring of so masterly an orator. Indeed, Mr. Townshend himself acknowledged the pains he had been at to collect his materials, and in a most elegant speech after the Stamp Act was repealed, very visibly glanced at Mr. William Kelly, of New York, as the person to whom he was principally indebted for his information. Mr. Kelly was a merchant of the first eminence at New York, but had retired from business for some time, and lived independent on his fortune. He was, however, perfectly conversant with the mutual interest of Great Britain and the Colonies, and to an understanding naturally excellent, had joined all the advantages of an extensive experience. Antecedent to the Repeal, he had been examined before the House of Commons about the affairs of America; and though his examination continued almost four hours, he acquitted himself through the whole with a politeness, a perspicuity, and a manliness, that gained him the highest reputation from that illustrious assembly."

\* Vol. i. p. 46.



## MR. DE BERDT TO LORD DARTMOUTH.

Enfield, August 22d, 1766.

MY LORD,

Your condescending and obliging letter of the 13th fills me with fresh concern, and that concern will run throughout America at your lordship's resignation, as it discovers that paternal affection which America has no right to expect from a step-mother. Your sentiments of that people are exceeding just, and the sound principles of religion and liberty those with whom I have been connected do certainly entertain, has greatly endeared me to that country; and I am satisfied, had your Lordship's connexions with them been longer and more intimate, it would have further engaged your attention, and would have given your lordship a high satisfaction to see religion and liberty flourish under your auspicious influence. It gives me a pleasure to be the medium of conveying to your lordship the grateful sentiments the House of Representatives of (illegible), on behalf of that Province, testify to your lordship and several others of their patrons, as far as come to their knowledge, by a vote of their Assembly, which accompanies this; and by



their letters to me which attended it, plainly discovering their duty to and affection for their king and mother country, which will ever be growing and increasing while a paternal love and authority are exercised over the whole family. The only quieting consideration is, as your Lordship hints, that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, and I cannot but hope that in his own time, your Lordship will be placed in a station to serve America, in which they will rejoice, and to which you have no aversion. But he that believeth must not make haste. I wish your Lordship health in your retirement from the hurries of Court, and much of the presence of God to sweeten every enjoyment.

I am your Lordship's

Obedient and humble servant,

DENNIS DE BERDT.\*

But I fear, in this discursive allusion to public affairs, I am losing sight of my personal narrative, and whatever interest it may possess. Miss De

\* As I am writing these lines (March, 1848), I have received an impression of the elder Mr. De Berdt's seal, which is characteristic. It has the letters "D. D.," and below, "1 Macc. xii. 18," the text being, "Wherefore ye shall do well to give us an answer hereto."



Berdt, her heart deeply interested in all that related to America, sometimes became a politician too, and wrote well and intelligently as to what she saw and heard around her. In a letter of the 25th of April, 1766, she describes a visit to the House of Commons in its palmyest days of deliberative renown.

“Mamma and I, a few days ago, were in the House of Commons, and were most agreeably entertained by hearing Mr. Pitt speak several times, and Mr. Charles Townshend. Mr. Pitt then appeared the venerable orator, and seems to speak the sentiments of his heart with ease. Charles Townshend is the young florid speaker, and I think with a great deal of eloquence. He commands attention as much as Mr. Pitt, but I was quite amazed at the confusion and disorder which there is in the House, though I have heard so much of it before. I knew Mr. Grenville by seeing his picture in the print of the Repeal, and Counsellor Wedderburne, too.\* They both spoke, but everybody seemed so insipid after the other great men, it quite tired our patience, especially those two persons who are such enemies to America. We

\* This, I presume, was the caricature print, a copy of which is preserved among the Simitiere MSS. in the Philadelphia Library.



heard Mr. Dowdeswell, and, indeed, almost all the great men in the House. For the first time we were very lucky ; we only wanted you with us to have made it completely agreeable. From anybody else you would think this only a compliment, but you may be assured *I* speak it from the dictates of my heart, which makes me ever wish for your company. . . . I should be glad if you can get any information about lands worth communicating to Lord Dartmouth, as the Board of Trade seem to be a little perplexed. Sayre is to write him from the northern part of America, and when he comes toward your Province, he can easily leave it to you to send the intelligence. It will give you some weight, and make you a little more known here, which cannot hurt you, and may be of service. Adieu, and believe me, my very dear friend,

“Yours, affectionately,

“E. D. B.”

As a matter of mere curiosity I have tried, but in vain, to identify the debate to which Miss De Berdt and her mother were listeners. The Parliamentary History, that most tantalizing scrap-book of great men's sayings and doings, exhibits a nearly perfect void in March and April, 1766. It simply



records the action of the House of Commons on the subject of General Warrants and the seizure of papers, on the 22d April, but refers to no debate. On the 24th, however, as appears from a letter from Mr. Rigby to the Duke of Bedford, there was a spirited debate, in which both Pitt and Grenville took part, no others being mentioned.\* This, however, hardly answers to the "few days ago" of Miss De Berdt's letter.

This and the next year (1766-1767), wore along tediously and anxiously for those who were watching the chapter of accidents with so much solicitude, and hoping that every moment would reveal some ground of hope. New and ill-defined plans for Agencies, and other modes of occupation in England were suggested, discussed, and abandoned, and the end of the time found the American lawyer more closely riveted than ever to his native country; and the English girl, faith and constancy to her lover in no way shaken, still clinging with filial affection to her home, her father and mother. I shall now do little else,—for I find I am verging closely on the limits I had prescribed for myself—

\* Bedford Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 333.



than make a sort of index of the correspondence for these years, extracting occasionally such single sentences as seem to be illustrative of the writers personally, or of their times. It was, let it be recollected, that dim and perplexed period of history between the Stamp Act and the Revenue Bills of 1767, when the shadow of a coming great event, cast by the sinking orb of imperial authority, rested gloomily on the land.\* When both Great Britain and America were restless, and anxious, and chafed, and no one knew where new trouble would come from, or what it would be.

MR. REED TO MISS DE BERDT.

Trenton, May 1st, 1766.

No, I assure you, I never entertained a thought of your coming to America, while it gives your pa-

\* My figure may be a little elaborate, and for aught I know, unintelligible, but it has its origin in a very bright and distinct reality. On the 30th of June, 1845, it was my lot to enjoy, in full perfection, a sunset view from the Rhigi, and not the least striking feature of the scene (and so it seemed to eyes more capable of appreciating it than mine), was the effect of the shadow cast in the setting sun, by the dark reality on which we stood—the mountain itself—on the bright prospect on which we gazed. It seemed as if a sombre and gigantic figure was rising up to devour or deface the peaceful scene.



rents pain. . . . Make yourself easy on this score, my dearest love, and be assured that if Providence points any tolerable way or prospect of my settling in England, there it shall be. In possessing you, I shall be richly rewarded for any anxiety I may feel in bidding adieu to my friends and native country. With you I can be happy anywhere ; without you, nowhere ; and indeed it is upon your account that I am anxious not to appear altogether inconsiderable in the world and languish in obscurity, but I submit it, my love, to your own judgment, whether an honorable distinction and affluent fortune would not be more eligible in America, than to live unregarded and with a scanty income in England.

On the 7th of August, she thus answers these suggestions :

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

I can't forgive myself for giving you cause for some expressions in your letter. My greatest pleasure arises from your approbation and love, but I should be unworthy of it, if I wished you to live here in an unhappy situation, which must be, if you



was unknown and unregarded. No, indeed, I have not such a wish. My judgment is convinced of the propriety of your opinion on this important affair; and my heart echoes back every sentiment of yours. I said I would dismiss uneasy thoughts from my breast, but indeed it is impossible. I cannot help it while you are at such a distance, and no probability of my seeing you again soon. I assure you, your letter has cast an uncommon gloom on my spirits—it seems to intimate I let fall some unguarded expression which has given you pain, as if I did not most ardently wish your return. If I have, I need your pardon. I feel unhappy at the thought of giving you any.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

August 15th, 1766.

Don't blame me for talking with what you call philosophical indifference. Indeed it does not arise from any such cold, formal motive, but from a desire to get some benefit even from my greatest unhappiness—that is, being absent from you. My hope that this would soon terminate, is again taken away by Lord Dartmouth resigning. We had planned several schemes, and perhaps some of them might



have been executed very cleverly, had he been made Secretary of State, which was promised him; but he is now retired into the country, though nobody is yet appointed in his room, as Lord of Trade. . . I like Mr. Stockton exceedingly. He is certainly the cleverest man I have yet seen from America. I take an uncommon pleasure in his company, and for a reason which perhaps you don't think of: he brings you to my mind by many of his actions.\* I can't tell particularly what it is, but there is something in his manner which brings *you* to my remembrance very sensibly, and makes my heart beat quick. . . . I am at a loss to tell if Mr. Stockton knows of our connexion. If he is ignorant of it, I shall keep him so, if I can, as I suppose it is your desire, by not informing him before. I shall be glad to know your wishes on the subject. I must endeavor to be more cautious, for I should certainly have discovered it, a few days ago, had it not been for my hat, which luckily hid a serious blush on his asking me a question or two about you. We talk a great deal of you. It seems to him quite natural,

\* This was Richard Stockton, of New Jersey—a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Mr. Reed had studied law with him. Mr. Stockton was at this time travelling for pleasure in Europe.



and I indulge the pleasure very often without being suspected.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

September 12th, 1766.

I have little reason to hide anything from my dear father, who seems every day to increase in his esteem for you, and to be more pleased with our connexion. He will do everything in his power, if Lord Dartmouth should come in again, to serve you ; but our prospects are a little clouded, as we cannot tell which will be the best way to pursue. The present Secretary to your Province (New Jersey), was formerly the Duke of Newcastle's cook, and I fancy put in by him, so that I fear an interest with Lord Dartmouth would not be of much use.\* . . . . I

\* These posts were all sinecures, the burden of which the Ministry tried from time to time to lighten. In the Grenville Correspondence, recently (1852) published, is a letter, vol. ii., p. 113, from Horace Walpole to George Grenville, in 1763, begging him not to turn out Grosvenor Bedford, who had been appointed by Sir Robert Walpole, *Collector of the Port of Philadelphia*, and had been in office twenty-four years. The Minister gives him but little encouragement, informing him, among other reasons for abating these sinecures, that while the revenue from customs from all North America was from £1000 to £2000, the expenses of collection were between £7000 and £8000.



suppose you must have heard of the honor the Lower Counties of Delaware have done my father, of a piece of plate. He has the satisfaction of having deserved it. They have made him their agent to deliver an address of thanks to his Majesty. I am afraid, if it is continued, it is very inconsiderable, and would be an Agency hardly worthy of you. Pray, had they ever an agent before? The Assembly of Boston continue to send their business to my papa; but the Governor's party still keep in Mr. Jackson.

MR. REED TO MISS DE BERDT.

September 13th, 1766.

I wish I could tell you that there appears any probability of anything arising from agencies, or indeed anything else that flatters my hopes of soon returning to you; but everything in this country has fallen into the old channel, and unless something occurs more than I can foresee at present, I question whether anything is to be expected from this quarter. . . . Money is very scarce, and people were much mistaken who supposed that the Repeal of the Stamp Act would produce an immediate alteration in this respect.



MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

26th September, 1766.

I have waited, my dear sir, till almost the last day of the ship's staying, in hopes of receiving a letter from you before I wrote, but this pleasure I am denied. It is almost six weeks since I have had a line from you, and the time seems very long indeed. . . . . Cannot you and Sayre contrive some scheme which could be executed either here or in America? Do not forget your hopes and wishes in respect to my father, but, I believe I have mentioned this to you before. If Lord Dartmouth had been made Secretary of State, my papa intended to have spoke for you to have been his Law-Secretary, or if that was filled up by a general Law-Secretary, to all the three departments, to be his Under one. It would, I believe, be no way unsuitable to your profession, for one Mr. Garth, the agent for Carolina, who is a counsellor, is Lord Shelburne's Under-Secretary. I think it would be the very thing to be wished for; but the deepest politicians cannot tell whether Lord Dartmouth will come in. Do you know if *they* are changed when the Secretary of State is,—but I am most apt to think they are not, and if that is the case, it would do very



well. I wish I could tell you what the business is that belongs to the office, that you might be a better judge whether it would be agreeable to you. However, at present nothing can be done."



## CHAPTER VI.

1766-1767.

*Correspondence continued—A Provincial Lawyer's Life  
—Doctor Franklin—Boston Agency—Lord Shelburne  
—Mr. Reed, Deputy Secretary for New Jersey—Mau-  
rice Morgan—Duke of Grafton's "Mosaic" Admi-  
nistration.*

IN the next letter, I find some details of a Provincial lawyer's life and modes of business, in days of hard work and circuit riding. They are alluded to by Mr. Reed as an excuse for an apparent want of punctuality in the correspondence.

MR. REED TO MISS DE BERDT.

October 4th, 1766.

You do me justice in believing I am as much disappointed in losing an opportunity of writing as you are in not hearing from me by the Philadelphia ves-



sels, but I ought before now to have told you my situation in this respect. . . . The practice of the law is extremely fatiguing in this country. There are sixteen courts which I am obliged to attend from home, oftentimes near a whole week at each, besides attending the assizes once a year through the whole province, which contains thirteen counties. I was upon this last when Friend arrived, and the ships you mention had sailed without my knowledge. . . . Thank you for your letter of May. I love you for your spirit in resolving against a life of dependence. I could not submit to it. The thought of dependence would dash my pride, and make my life miserable.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

Nov. 7, 1766.

Mamma desires her affectionate regards to you, and is much obliged to you for your kind remembrance of her. Instead of growing cool, I do think your friends in Artillery Court love you more than ever. . . . I find the way to have letters by the packet from you is to write by them myself, as by that you know when they come in, and it just gives you time to write a few lines back.



MR. REED TO MISS DE BERDT.

15th Nov., 1766.

Your letter was given to me at the bar, while I was pleading an important cause. It was a cause of great importance and expectation, and our success was equal to our most sanguine hopes. I am not yet without hopes that something may arise from Massachusetts to favor our wishes.

At the moment he was thus hopefully and cheer-ingly writing, she towards whom these hopes were directed, was agonized by a scene of domestic sorrow,—the illness of her aged father, which she thus describes.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

London, Nov. 15, 1766.

My dear father is ill, and has been so about a week. We at first thought it no more than a slight cold and fever. It now intermits, and he takes the bark every two hours. His physicians fear it is a slight apoplexy, or would at least turn to one if not timely prevented. To-morrow is the critical day. If they can keep the fit off, they will think him out



of danger. Oh! my dear friend, you can hardly think our situation. . . He is extremely well the day the disorder is off, but the consequence it is hard to determine. I would not have surprised you with such bad news; only I thought if he should not get better, it would still be a greater surprise, and I have a thousand fears on your account. You tell me the fatigue of business impairs your constitution. . . . I must hope before this you are in some measure recovered, or it would sink me down indeed. Were you but near me, I could support better this double, this heavy affliction. I now indeed feel the pains of absence from one I tenderly love, more, I think, than ever.

My dear mamma is amazingly well considering. I am much afraid it will affect her with great force afterwards. We are all obliged to appear cheerful to keep up my father's spirits, as a failure of his spirits would be of the worst consequence. I hardly dare look forward, such a melancholy scene of disappointment presents itself. . . . We who are the nearest connected with my father will the most sensibly feel his loss. Adieu, my friend, you must be my father as well as friend. You are indeed already mine by the most endearing ties.

Ever faithfully yours,

E. D. B.



P. S. Since I wrote this morning the doctors have been here, and think my father better, and are in great hopes of but a slight fit to-morrow. I left my letter open till late at night, on purpose to give the doctors' opinions. I am afraid of hoping too much. The last part of a letter he wrote before he was taken ill was to you, and the first he is able to (dictate) is to you, which mamma is now writing. You see how much you engage the attention of every part of our family. We wish my father's indisposition may be kept a secret. Once more, with rather a more cheerful heart, I bid you adieu.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

December 12, 1766.

I have the pleasure to inform you that my dear father continues pretty well, though I think he has hardly recovered his usual strength and spirits. . . . You judge exceedingly right when you congratulate me on having friends that give me few anxieties. Indeed I have none but what arise from the overflowings of affection. Oh! my dear friend, was you but here to participate my pleasures, how much would it increase them.



In another part of this letter occurs the only allusion—and this in not the most friendly spirit—to Dr. Franklin, that I find in the correspondence. I must not be understood as expressing any opinion of its justice, but simply to cite it as an item of familiar intelligence.

My papa has a good many letters to write by the packet, and as he cannot transact business as quickly as he used to do, you must excuse a letter from him now. He bids me tell you his opinion of Dr. Franklin,—that he stood entirely neuter till he saw which way the cause would be carried; and then broke out fiercely on the side of America.

MR. REED TO MISS DE BERDT.

14th January, 1767.

There is little doubt of Mr. Jackson's being removed from the Boston Agency. The Assembly voted it, 81 against 6, as I suppose you must by this time have heard. The Governor prorogued them to some day this week, and what further is done we have no account. . . . Banish, my dearest love, every thought of my settling in America. . . . I write to your father by this opportunity,



and cannot yet give up the hope of returning this year. Say but the word, my charmer, and I shall be with you.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

30th January, 1767.

Boston still keeps me in suspense: this month may perhaps bring the news of a determination on one side or the other, and an important one it will be to our happiness. It appears to me very uncertain which way it will be decided.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

3d February, 1767.

Lord Shelburne is very complaisant to my father, and treats him with much respect.\* He is very willing to make use of his interest with him for you, but we don't know what method to take, and

\* Lord Shelburne was then Secretary of State. On the whole, he seems to have been the steadiest friend America had, in all these trials. He had taken office in Lord Chatham's administration. By the by, I am not aware that it has been observed that Burke's image of the Mosaic Cabinet is not original. Lord Chesterfield, writing to his son on the 1st June, 1767, says, "I am apt to think that this will be a Mosaic ministry, made up of *de pieces rapportées* from different connexions."



while you are so far off, it is impossible, I fear, for you to direct us. While I have no expectation of your being able to inform me, yet there is a pleasure in the smallest hopes of our once more meeting again; but to you, I own the difficulties that are in the way make me have many an anxious hour. The wishes of my heart are no secret from you.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

February 19th, 1767.

I was almost sorry you were in such high spirits about the Boston Agency, as I confess I have not such raised expectations, and yet I do not give up all hopes. I endeavored all I could to persuade my father to write you, when you heard he was made Agent, to come as soon as you could conveniently, but I could not prevail with him. . . . In about a month, we may expect to hear which way the House of Assembly determines, and though I attempt to check my expectations and forbid them rising too high for fear of a disappointment, yet they will, and I cannot conceal the happiness I have in the prospect. These hopes and expectations I cannot hide from you, as I know they give you pleasure. . . . I have undertaken a new em-



ployment ; perhaps you will not guess what it is. It is no less than (being) my father's clerk. I tell him I believe I must not marry, as he will hardly know what to do without me. My mother says I must ask the opinion of counsel.

P. S. Since I wrote the above, I have had the happiness of receiving yours by the Packet (14th January). When you tell me, if I will but speak the word, you'll immediately come to me, I am almost tempted to say it, and forget prudence ; but, however, we must wait a little longer, and not let patience be vanquished.

MR. REED TO MISS DE BERDT.

February 20th, 1767.

The Assembly of Boston are now sitting, and we expect they will fix their Agent before they break up. Mr. Cary\* writes Sayre, that they are determined their public business shall go through no other hands than Mr. De Berdt's.

\* Richard Cary, of Charlestown, Massachusetts, an intimate friend of Mr. Reed and the De Berdts.



## MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

February 28th, 1767.

Indeed, I not only miss the pleasure of your company, but the advantage I once received from it, and I often find the want of your advice and instruction, but I hope to enjoy these pleasures again; and my heart must be cast in a different mould than it is at present, if I don't prize it as my greatest happiness.

Let me here pause for a moment and say, that this is not the only allusion, in the correspondence, —though the only one that I am able to extract—to the guidance, or, in her own words, the “instruction,” which, in their days of personal association, Mr. Reed had given to his young and gentle mistress. His own education had been very complete. He was a scholar from early training, and a student in habit. The Academical Institutions of the Colonies had always aims of high scholarship; and it is well known, that when the political disturbances between the two countries began, no little admiration was attracted by the scholarlike and gentlemanly tone of the papers which came from the pens of



our backwood rhetoricians. There were not only "forest-born Demosthenes," but many whose written eloquence was distinguished. Mr. Reed belonged to this class of intellectually graceful and accomplished men. His writings at a later day abundantly show this; and one may easily imagine, even if the acknowledgment had not thus been made, the pride with which he guided the reading (perhaps it hardly deserves the grave name of study), of the young girl whose destiny he hoped to be his, and who, by and by and for ever, was to be his intelligent companion. Many a man's heart has been won by sympathies of this kind,—the sympathies of study and of thought. No one knew it better than the master of poetry, who in his realization of perfect feminine character, speaks of her as

" An unlessoned girl, unschooled, unpractised ;  
Happy in this, that she is not yet so old  
But she may *learn*; and happier than this,  
She is not bred so dull but she may learn;  
Happiest in all, in that her gentle spirit  
Commits itself to yours to be directed,  
As to her lord, her sovereign, her king."



## MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

March 14th, 1767.

It is with pleasure proportionate to the sincerity and warmth of my esteem, that I tell you my dear father's intentions are no longer a secret, and he does really propose sending for you as soon as he is appointed Agent, but can do nothing towards recommending you at Boston till he is satisfied of the salary they intend him.

## MR. REED TO MISS DE BERDT.

April 5th, 1767.

The determinations of the people of Boston have kept me all this winter and spring in the most cruel suspense, and though I observe a further proof of their confidence in your father, I do not find that they have yet considered him other than as a special Agent. They were not broke up at the last accounts, so that I still hope to have some agreeable tidings. How hard it is, that the happiness of two lovers should depend on the slow debates and wary counsels of politicians.

The next letters from England, whilst they in-



formed Mr. Reed that his friends had secured for him, probably through Lord Shelburne's good offices, a Deputy Provincial Secretaryship (for New Jersey), contained gloomy intimations of commercial embarrassments.\* "If you were here," Miss De Berdt writes, on the 11th April (1767), "you might be a judge how much we are distressed for want of remittances—much worse than in the time of the Stamp Act, because then nobody could expect anything ;—however, we must hope for better times. My father is in great anxiety and distress on account of remittances. Pray use your influence with Sayre to press our friends with you, to send home more money."

MR. REED TO MISS DE BERDT.

24th April, 1767.

The Assembly of Massachusetts have determined nothing, nor do I at present see any appearance of

\* The Secretary for New Jersey was Maurice Morgan, appointed in 1766 or 1767. Mr. Morgan was the *protégé* of Lord Shelburne, and was afterwards, I presume on Lord Shelburne becoming Prime Minister, in 1782, an Under Secretary of State. He was Secretary of Legation to the Mission to negotiate the Treaty of 1783. He died, at an advanced age, in 1802.



it. Whether they design to content themselves with your father as a Special Agent, or whether the Governor's party is too strong for any favorable determination, I do not know. They were prorogued to the middle of this month, since which I have not heard a syllable from that quarter. . . . How untoward is our fate, that the few talents Providence has conferred on me, should in this country insure me a handsome and ample independence, but leave me destitute in that country where nothing else is wanting to complete my felicity! My business now produces me at the rate of £1000 per annum, and is increasing beyond my ability to go through it, though my two brothers, and a young gentleman who is serving a clerkship with me, assist me. But alas, it is local, and contributes very little to the gratifying my prevailing wishes. . . . My family is decreasing, contrary to the usual custom of families, and I hope in a little time to get my brothers into business, when I shall only have my father and sister to take care of. Thus, my dearest love, I open to you the state of my affairs with a freedom which your partiality to me only could authorize; nor is there one discouraging circumstance in it which I should not think myself



bound in honor to communicate to you before you favored me with your hand.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

8th May, 1767.

I begin to give up all thoughts of hearing good news from Boston, and I have a thousand fears that their disputes with their Governor will last so long as to prevent their transacting the business which is so important to us. . . . I leave it to mamma to tell you whether you have had any rivals, and I give her leave to tell you, none have displaced my American guest, nor, I believe, ever will, till he wishes to take his leave, and is tired of his place in my heart.

MR. REED TO MISS DE BERDT.

9th June, 1767.

Our friend Sayre is about leaving Philadelphia, on his return to Boston, and thence to England. How happy, my dear Hetty, should I be, if affairs had so turned out that I could accompany him, but I now have given over every expectation of that kind for the present, and endeavor to resign myself to my fate in the best manner I can. . . . I



am sorry to observe, from the published accounts, that Governor Bernard stands so well at home.\* His contests with the Assembly have, I believe, solely prevented the appointment of your father as Agent, and it is through a piece of his mismanagement, or rather busy, meddling disposition, while he was Governor of New Jersey, that I met with any difficulty in the Secretaryship.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

13th June, 1767.

There is a gentleman now here, who I believe is soon going home to Boston; his name is Barratt, who has a great esteem for our family, and I dare say would do anything to show it friendship. If you go to Boston, it would be of service to you to get acquainted with him, as I believe his family and connexions are of weight in the Province. They are all of the Governor's party, and therefore it might be of more use to secure his friendship. I am not yet determined whether to tell him of our connexion myself before he returns. You will not be surprised at my disclosing this secret when I tell

\* Letters of approval from Government had just been published in the American papers.



you I have already been under the necessity of acquainting him that I am engaged. However, I don't know whether I can trust him, for fear his party spirit should get the better of his friendship. . . . My heart aches lest all these things should more entangle you, and embarrass your return. Forgive the fears of my anxious bosom—to you I communicate them without reserve.



## CHAPTER VII.

1768-1769.

*Mr. De Berdt Agent for Massachusetts—Mr. Reed's Letters—Lord Chesterfield—Sayre's Pamphlet—Mr. Reed's visit to Boston—Death of his Father.*

I FEAR that even familiar readers will be wearied, if I continue, in detail, my extracts from this lover correspondence, which lasted for nearly three years longer, and contained the same uniformity of hopes and plans and disappointments,—the prospect indeed darkening as time rolled on and new political disturbances and commercial difficulties added to the perplexity. I therefore hasten rapidly on, referring to comparatively few of the letters of the succeeding years, and stating, merely by way of historical explanation, that though Mr. De Berdt was at last made permanent Agent for Massachusetts, the salary was very inadequate, and the appointment was rejected by Governor Bernard and his



loyal Council. In what spirit Mr. Reed received this disappointment is apparent from the following extract.

MR. REED TO MISS DE BERDT.

4th August, 1767.

Sayre will tell you how the cursed feuds of the Boston Assembly have destroyed all my hopes of returning to you this spring. I have often lamented that our happiness depended on the unsteady flame of politics, but never felt the disappointment and chagrin arising from it more keenly than I did this morning, when I received Sayre's letter, informing me that the Governor and Council had not confirmed your father's appointment.

And again a month later :

I fear, from the present appearances, there is less probability of the Boston Agency than there was some months ago. The flame of opposition begins to kindle at Boston on account of the New York affairs;—to what heights it may blaze, or when be extinguished, we must leave to time to determine.\*

\* The Revenue Bill of 1767, which kindled the flame of revolt more brightly than the Stamp Act ever had done. Like the



One of these letters was carried to England by Mr. Sayre, and on the 21st October, I find in a letter from the elder Mr. De Berdt, the following meagre allusion—all however that has survived—of his intercourse with the Ministry, then on the verge of a great American blunder, and a more practical oppression than had yet been attempted. . . . “I carried,” says the letter, “Mr. Sayre to my Lord Shelburne, on his arrival, where we saw Mr. Morgan. . . . The Ministry give us the strongest assurance that they will never injure the liberties of America, whatever mistakes they may be led into by designing people. Lord Shelburne intends to have me with him in a few days to make some inquiry, &c., into your affairs, the result of which I shall venture to communicate to you, who are too prudent to make private conversation public.”\*

Stamp Act, it passed Parliament almost without discussion. Lord Shelburne, always true to Colonial rights, objected to it, at least in correspondence; but his influence was of no moment. Townshend, the contriver of this new fatality, died in September, 1767, and Lord North became Chancellor of the Exchequer; and, what was much worse, Lord Hillsborough, Secretary of State for American affairs. The correspondence is strangely silent as to this new Stamp Act.

\* In the Massachusetts State Papers, p. 102, are some details as



With this letter, went one from Miss De Berdt, which I cannot refrain from quoting at length, as a specimen of delicate and affectionate writing—such as, in its truth and simple eloquence, must have made her lover's heart beat proudly as well as gratefully.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

Enfield, October 22d, 1767.

I received a double pleasure from my dear friend's letter, by our good friend Sayre, who arrived about a week ago. He makes us very happy by his com-

to Lord Shelburne's kind intentions. The General Court of Massachusetts had voted thanks, on the Stamp Act repeal, to a number of opposition Peers and Commons. Among the former were several who are not generally thought of as America's friends. I especially refer to Lord Chesterfield, then on the verge of his long and brilliant life, who had voted cordially for the Repeal of the Stamp Act (Letters, vol. iv. pp. 418, 420). Mr. De Berdt, writing to Boston on the 19th September, 1766, says, "Since my last to you, I have received several letters from your friends, in answer to your vote of thanks (which I enclose); and the universal approbation it has met with, proves it a very well-judged measure; and Lord Chesterfield, and old Speaker Onslow, whose hearts were warm in your cause, were particularly pleased." (Mass. Papers, p. 102.)



pany, especially when our absent friends are the subject of his conversation, as he can inform us of many particulars, which, though trifling in themselves, are far from being so when they concern those we love. The same day also brought yours by the Packet ; and indeed I could not help feeling very happy, to find that you were relieved from the anxiety and fears arising from my seeming long silence. These are pains we must be subject to, while absent from each other. However, I hope they will one day all be forgot in the pleasure of meeting ; and, though long delayed, nothing shall tempt me to give up the pleasing expectation. Three years are now past, since I was made happy by your company here, and though I am surrounded by my friends, yet I own to you, there is a heaviness about my heart that I cannot get rid of, when I recollect how much happier I have spent this day of the year ;\* and now I receive no small pleasure in thinking that perhaps while I am writing, your thoughts are with me, and paying a visit, though but in imagination. However, any way, I bid you welcome, and please myself with the fond hope that before another year passes, I shall have it in my

\* 22d October—her birthday, N. S., O. S. 11th.



power to realize the happiness of bidding you welcome, and in a greater degree add to your comfort and ease than I have ever had it in my power to do, and this shall be the delightful employment of my future life. . . . Indeed, it has long been my study to improve and cultivate those qualities your partiality imagines I possess. But in whatever you are disappointed, this you will ever find true, that my heart is fixed in its choice of the object of its affection and esteem, and never had a latent wish to change.

I really believe it is unnecessary for me to say you have nothing to fear from any rivals, who, though in some circumstances suitable, are very far from having the least share of my love, nor is there any foundation for your being apprehensive that I shall ever give encouragement to hopes which I never intend to gratify. My heart has always been the dictator of my hand and tongue, and I have often constrained myself to tell more of the truth than perhaps was necessary, that I might refuse with the least pain those requests. I find our connexion is no longer a secret among our friends in America. We have heard of it from several people in New York. I am at a loss to know how they came by their intelligence ; but if it is of no disservice to you,



I am far from being concerned about it. Our acquaintance think of nobody but Mr. Sayre, but I suppose when they come to see that does not take place, they may recollect *you* again. Oh ! my dear friend, how long will it be before I can let them know whom I have distinguished as the companion of my future life, and give you the last and dearest proof of the sincerity and constancy of my affection ? But this is hid in the dark womb of futurity, and it is for us to wait in patience. This liberty of communicating our thoughts is yet left us ; and there is also a pleasure, known only to those whose friendship is equally sincere and delicate, when we are sure we are interested in each other's wishes and prayers, for I can truly say :

“ Whene’er I asked for blessings on your head,  
Nothing was cold or formal that I said ;  
My warmest vows to Heaven were made for thee,  
And love still mingled with my piety.”

I am persuaded you do not forget me, in your most serious and dispassionate moments, for I should not be happy if I did not think your judgment and reason were in my favor.

Our good friend Sayre gives us but indifferent accounts of the present state of the Boston people,



but he says he thinks the next session will be more favorable to our wishes ; and perhaps, by that time, every other circumstance may be settled in a manner that will facilitate your return. I hope your next will tell me the success of the cause you mention, as I shall be anxious to know.\*

Mr. Sayre is exceedingly well, and gives us great encouragement to hope that our previous difficulties will soon be at an end ; and I think everything has a better appearance than some time ago. We are vastly happy in our connexion with him, and he seems, and I hope is so with us. Indeed, I do not know any other person that could have been so perfectly agreeable.

Mamma leaves it with me to thank you by this opportunity for your last letter, and to present you with her sincere love. Adieu, my very dear friend, and never doubt the sincerity or affection of

Yours,

E. DE BERDT.

With this letter, which no one, I am sure, will find fault with me for quoting at length, I close the correspondence of 1767.

\* Every student will recall the younger Pliny's beautiful character of his wife Calpurnia (Ep. ix. 19), who watched his lawyer cares, and shared his lawyer triumphs.



The next year (1768) dawned gloomily. Though the correspondence is more than usually silent on public affairs, yet it is easy to see that the perplexity out of doors and the growing discontents between the two countries were exercising a dark and depressing influence on those whose personal interests were so deeply involved. The lull between the Stamp Act and Mr. Townshend's Revenue Bill was very brief and precarious. The financial scheme of 1767, such as it was, with its taxes on teas and paints and glass, and other articles of daily use, was the rash project of a brilliant and uncertain genius. It shot an explosive brand across the Atlantic; for then burst forth the flame in America which never burned out, till every vestige of metropolitan authority was destroyed. The progress of discontent, remonstrance, and resistance, from this time till 1775, when the sword was drawn, was fearfully rapid. In a letter from Miss De Berdt, of 9th January, 1768, she speaks of "the shocking change in the Ministry;"\* and well might she so describe

\* On the same day (9th January, 1768), that Miss De Berdt wrote thus emphatically to her lover, Dr. Franklin wrote more cautiously to his son, the Governor. "Mr. Conway resigns, and Lord Weymouth takes his place. Lord Gower is made President of the Council, in the room of Lord Northington. Lord Shel-



it. It was the change that occurred on Charles Townshend's death, in September, 1767—just at the time when he had done his work of thoughtless mischief—and Lord North was made Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, soon after, Lord Hillsborough American Secretary. It was the first form of the Ministry known afterwards as the Duke of Grafton's Administration, whose misfortune it was "*to tease America*" into rebellion,\* and to throw away an empire. The student who desires to study the record of paltry policy, may, in the Parliamentary history of these times, have it to his heart's content. This is not the place to trace it.

Whenever in her letters, Miss De Berdt refers either to political matters or to business, I am much struck with the precision and distinctness of her mode of writing. "There is a storm," she writes in August (1768), "gathering, which will break over

burne is stripped of the American business, which is given to Lord Hillsborough, as Secretary of State for America,—a new distinct department. Lord Sandwich, it is said, comes into the Post Office in his place. Several of the Bedford party are now to come in. How these changes may affect us, a little time will show."—vii. Sparks' Franklin, 376.

\* This was Colonel Barré's expressive phrase, in a debate of Nov. 8th, 1768.—Cavendish Debates, p. 44.



England as well as America, and what will be the consequence it is impossible to say."

On the 20th of May she writes, "As to land affairs, Sayre will inform you by what means they are at a stand. I am anxious to know whether you meet with success with those you are concerned in. Everything was done here which could be, and I think better than if our friend Sayre had gone into Scotland. He has been very busy in writing his political piece, and is so now in sending them to the most considerable of the nobility and House of Commons, by the desire of his patron, General Oglethorpe, who has a very high opinion of Sayre's understanding and genius. I am so really his friend that I begin to fear the effect this applause may have on his mind, but perhaps the Critical Reviewers will prevent the bad consequence, as they ever oppose books on that side of the question. I fancy the author will be guessed by those two letters of my dear father."

This casual reference, in a young lady's letter, reproduced at the end of eighty years, enables me to identify this pamphlet. A copy is now before me, found in the Philadelphia Library. It bears the title of "The Englishman Deceived, a Political Piece, wherein some very important Secrets of



State are briefly recited, and offered to the consideration of the Public, 1768.”\* There is in it nothing of greater interest than the two letters from Mr. De Berdt, which his daughter mentions, one dated November 1765, and the other, January, 1768. These are very earnest and decorous productions, in every way creditable to the old gentleman’s heart and intelligence. In other respects, Sayre’s pamphlet is of little value.

The following letter, in the middle of 1768, is perhaps the most gloomy in the whole correspondence, and seems to be in answer to one of an equally desponding tone from America. It is the only one that even hints at separation, and that but for an instant.

MISS DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

London, July 4th, 1768.

I received my dearest friend’s letter, by Storey, a few days ago. It speaks of a mind crowded with

\* The Critical Review, for June, 1768, thus disposes of Sayre’s pamphlet: “Not a single secret from beginning to end: the whole being the production of some furious anti-Anglican, and stitched up in the form of a pamphlet, from the most vulgar hackneyed materials.”



anxieties. This would give me pain, arising from any quarter, but especially to find it proceeds from our affairs on this side of the water. It is easy to reconcile the contradictions in Sayre's and my letters when I tell you that the state of our affairs was by no means an agreeable one, and his not being used to it made it appear much worse to him, they were certainly better when I wrote a few months before. I was afraid the power of attorney and letter would frighten you, and I would have told you in my letter how the case stood, but I wrote before I knew of the transaction, and then it was too late for the vessel; but I hope long before this your mind has been made easy, as our after-letters were not of the same kind. How hard it is, that my dearest friend, whose bosom I most wish to inspire with joy and pleasure, should thus be subject to uneasiness, and that my opportunities of giving him pain are many, while those to increase his happiness are few and confined; but to think of him with the most ardent affection, to make him the subject of many hours' conversation, and to unbend my mind in the safe confidence of mutual love—if these can afford him the least pleasure, they are, and always shall be, devoted to him; for, believe me, since the moment we parted, my



heart has never had one thought of giving itself to another, or of receiving any but yours.

But if the obstacles to our happiness do appear insurmountable to you, my will shall be yours, and we must leave the hand of time to erase the traces of our mutual friendship ; but, oh ! my dear friend, how does my heart recoil, and feel a thousand painful sensations strike on itself at the first mention of disunion, when our hearts seem to have been cast into kindred moulds, and have been so long endeavoring to become more like each other. No ; it must be otherwise. Providence will surely smile on us, and give us the opportunity of joining our hands, since it has united our hearts.

Boston, indeed, is discouraging ; but I can't see what difference it can make whether the Governor joins in the appointment, since the Assembly pay the three hundred a year, and will certainly continue it while they employ my father, which will most probably be as long as he lives. It appears to be almost as sure as if the Governor and Council joined in it. If it is not fixed this session, I think it will be better for you to take it as it is, and come over next spring, if you can settle your affairs in America. If we can't get my dear father to approve of this scheme, which to his prudence and



experience may seem a little romantic, you must write that some land affairs would make such a step not so much so as it at first appears, and when you are here, something or other will surely make it easy for you to stay, and except you are determined to remain in America till everything is quite right, which is not, I fear, very likely for some years, I don't see what advantage can arise from your staying six or even twelve months longer, or when you could come with more likelihood of success. I mean after you have settled the Secretaryship, and made those friends easy whom you leave behind, that there may be no reason on that account for your return. If you could make the New Jersey Agency certain, and bring money enough with you to answer your expenses the year in the Temple, which cannot be very great, unattended with the care of a family, which would be highly imprudent the first year, I think there can be no reasonable objection but what will have the same or even more force a year or two hence, owing to the uncertainty of my dear father's life, which, I think, makes it more necessary you should determine to come as soon in the spring as possible. Going to Boston will be necessary on all accounts.

How happy should I feel at thus adjusting a



plan for return, were it unattended with those fears which will intrude. An advocate within my breast, as well as your repeated assurances, convinces me that you will make some sacrifice of applause and eclat in this world to her whose faithfulness and affection in some sort demand it. Had I more fortune and accomplishments of mind or beauty, I should, with the highest joy, give them all to you, my dearest friend, and make them subservient to that which lies so near my heart,—your happiness; but I need not wish to be any other, since as I am, your friendship views me in the light I most desire.

Believe me as much as ever,

Yours,

E. DE BERDT.

There was no mistaking the tenor of a letter like this, in which certainly “love mingled largely with her piety,” especially in that part in which Miss De Berdt suggests a mode of obviating her father’s scruples as to Mr. Reed’s return, and which stricter moralists than lovers usually are, might find it difficult to justify. The appeal had its intended effect, and no sooner was the letter received, than Mr. Reed determined, at all sacrifices, forget-



ting Agencies and Secretaryships, and every plan for making his career easy and independent, to return to England the coming summer.

As the time approached, difficulties increased. On one side of the Atlantic, popular discontent was showing itself in every form of bold resistance, —while on the other, the infatuation of the ministerial majority seemed to know no bounds. America and Americans were treated as beneath the level of ordinary contempt. “To be an American or a friend of America,” Miss De Berdt writes in January, 1769, “is a great disadvantage:” and a month later, she says, “in this melancholy situation of things, it is impossible for any one to stem the tide against America.” Parliament was engaged not merely in reiterating assertions of its authority to do with the Colonies just what it pleased, but was taking from their hiding-places and furbishing up for use, ancient penal statutes, by means of which Americans were to be transported first and tried afterwards. Every element of trouble and perplexity seemed thus to be at work to obstruct the path of those whose nearest and dearest interests were identified with peace. Still, though to be an American’s friend was a reproach, this English girl clung to her lover with fidelity which never faltered,



and he in return struggled manfully with the difficulties and embarrassments that stood in the way of their reunion. They were vexatious enough.

In August, 1769, Mr. Reed, in pursuance of Miss De Berdt's wish, visited Boston, in those primitive days, a long horseback journey. There, by one party, at least, he was treated with great kindness and respect. No claim seems to have been stronger than that of Mr. De Berdt's son-in-law. Mr. Hancock, Mr. Cushing, Mr. Quincy, Mr. Cary, he seems to have been most intimate with: the first-named returning to the South with him. The intimacy with Mr. Quincy matured into most devoted friendship. Samuel Adams wrote to Mr. De Berdt, "I received your favor by Mr. Reed, whose good sense, agreeable conversation, and polite behavior, entitle him to very great respect and esteem;" and he adds, in something of prophetic strain, "Britain may fall sooner than she is aware, while her colonies, who are now struggling for liberty, may survive her fate, and tell the story to their children's children."

The personal kindness of which he was the object, was, however, productive of no precise result. Boston was at the moment in a new ferment. Mr. Bollan, in London, through the agency of Alder-



man Beckford, then fiercely in opposition, had procured copies of a number of Governor Bernard's confidential letters to Government, and sent them to Boston, where they were at once published, and produced great irritation.\* I infer from the following extracts from Mr. Reed's letters, that great merit was claimed for Mr. Bollan's services and success in the timely transmission of these papers. It would seem, too, as if Mr. De Berdt's influence among the Boston patriots was rather on the wane, —a very natural result, by the by, at his advanced age, and with his impaired energies.

MR. REED TO MISS DE BERDT.

Boston, August 7th, 1769.

In the short time I have been here, I have met with very great civilities from our friends, and am particularly pleased with our friend Cary, who is really a man of good sense, and seems to have a most friendly heart, especially towards Artillery Court. His daughter is just married. Her disposition and temper I think resemble yours, after which I need not tell you I am pleased with

\* Hutchinson's History, pp. 221, 226.



her. . . . From the conversations I have been in here, I find, notwithstanding the large majority in the last Court, your father stands on ticklish ground. His age, his infirmities, are aggravated,—his fortune and circumstances misrepresented,—his weight of influence spoken slightly of, and in short every measure is taken by his enemies to have him laid aside.. As I know you have a deserved influence, you must exert it, not only to have the most expeditious and vigilant steps pursued respecting Governor Bernard, but to give the earliest and most minute intelligence of his proceedings: I mention this, as the want of it has been one of the objections to your father; and put every wheel in motion, my dear creature, to obtain copies of Bernard's letters, or others that have been written respecting this Province, or America in general. You cannot imagine what stress is laid upon it, and I will venture to affirm, that upon the procuring them we may build with confidence. A little money would be well laid out for this purpose, and the Province, I have no doubt, would cheerfully repay it.\*

\* It would seem from an entry in John Adams's Diary, that Mr. Reed on this visit was not accompanied, as I had supposed (*Life of Reed*, vol. i. p. 40), by the "*Farmer*" Dickinson, but by his brother. The entry in Mr. Adams's Diary is curious and charac-



The Boston errand, owing to this new agitation, was fruitless, and disappointment ensued as to the New Jersey Agency, Dr. Franklin being unexpectedly appointed to the latter post. Mr. Reed's determination to return to England was not, however, changed. All his arrangements to that end were made, and he was on the eve of embarking, in the summer of 1769, when he was summoned to the dying bed of his father, whence he wrote the following letter—the last of the lover series with which the reader shall be troubled—to Miss De Berdt. Though it has been in print before, I cannot refrain from again copying it.

## MR. REED TO MISS DE BERDT.

Amwell, Dec. 15th, 1769.

This letter, my dearest love, is dated at the country retirement my father chose, after his misfortunes ; and where he has spent his time since in contemplation and books. He has suddenly been seized with a dangerous distemper, that will probably in a few days free him from all earthly cares. I was on

teristic of the times. The visitors, Mr. Reed and Mr. Dickinson, are spoken of as "cool, reserved, and guarded all day."



the point of taking my passage, when the accident happened ; but you, who so well know and tenderly practise the duties of filial love, will, I am sure, think this a sufficient cause for my delay. I thank God, that amidst all the afflictions which Providence has laid upon him, he ever supported his character for integrity and honesty ; and now meets the approaches of death with a firmness and serenity, which show it to be a subject he has long thought of, and an enemy he is prepared to meet. It is an event that in a few years must in the common course of nature have happened, and as I have the approbation of my own heart that I have neglected nothing in my power to support and comfort his declining years, so it will be my consolation that I have stayed to perform the last duties that can be paid him, and seen that nothing has been omitted to lessen his pains, and as far as the best skill, the kindness of friends, and tenderness of children avail, alleviated the bitter stroke to which sooner or later all must submit. The loss of friends is a tax upon life which must be paid, and which we in our turn subject others to. Every event of this kind only serves to draw the ties of affection closer, and endear those surviving friends in proportion to our sorrow for the loss of others. How much do I feel your absence,



my dearest love, on such a melancholy occasion ; that sweet participation and sympathy, which is the essence of friendship and love, would teach me to bear affliction, or at least support me under it. And yet, why should I wish you to partake of my sorrows ? you, whose heart it will ever be my ambition and desire to cheer with joy and inspire with pleasure, for whom I can sacrifice the company of the nearest friends, and tenderest connexions of nature, leave all these, my native country, and whatever is thought dearest in life, to return and give you this last and greatest proof of my affection. Adieu, my dearest love, once more. This perhaps may be the last letter you will receive, but I shall continue to write while there are opportunities, but our winters are so severe that vessels are not frequent at this time of year. That Providence which disposes all things, and to which we ought cheerfully to submit, will, I trust, favor our wishes, and give *you* as its best and greatest blessing to your affectionate and devoted

J. R.\*

\* Mr. Andrew Reed, my paternal great-grandfather was in his day, a man of some mark in this infant community. His name is associated with many public Institutions ; it is among the early contributors to the Pennsylvania Hospital.



On the day after this letter was written, the elder Mr. Reed died, and on the 14th of the following March (1770), the lover having paused long enough to adjust his father's affairs, embarked at Philadelphia in a vessel bound to Newry, in Ireland,—his intention then being to settle in Great Britain.



## CHAPTER VIII.

1769—1770.

*Mr. Reed sails for England—Commercial Difficulties and Death of Dennis De Berdt—Marriage and Return to America.*

ON the 15th April, 1770, the vessel in which Mr. Reed sailed, touched at Kinsale, whence he wrote a few hurried lines to announce his coming, and on the 21st, after stopping a short time at Newry, I find, from a letter to his brother-in-law, Mr. Pettit, he was at Dublin, prevented by a gale of wind from crossing the Channel. What happened there is best told in his own words. And here, as the days of distant correspondence between the lovers are now over, I must, for the further illustration of my subject, resort to Mrs. Reed's letters to her family, in the sequel of my tale, adding only the further remark, that, in these letters, I have been anew impressed with the clearness and grace of her epistolary style,



especially when writing on subjects of direct and practical interest. The two following letters from Mr. Reed tell their story of painful reality with exactness, and without affectation of fine writing. Little did he think when he wrote to Miss De Berdt from the bedside of his father, that almost at the same time, she was sorrowing for a dying father too.

MR. REED TO MR. PETTIT.

Dublin, April 25th, 1770.

DEAR SIR—

I wrote to you a few days ago a letter which you will receive with this; but a very important event having happened, I sit down to communicate it; but my mind is so agitated I scarcely know what I write. Think what I must feel, at looking over the English newspapers, to see that my dearest, worthiest, and kindest of friends, my expected, and indeed, if love and kindness constituted the parent, my father, Mr. De Berdt, is no more. By the papers, he died about ten days ago. I have been disappointed in my passage to Chester, which kept me here a few days longer than I intended.\* But I am

\* Mr. De Berdt died 18th April, 1770.



now going off this moment, and shall not stop, night or day, till I see the dear and distressed family. God knows what effect this melancholy event will have on my future life, but I think it not unlikely you will now soon see me in America. What a happy circumstance it is that I have acted as I did, and that I have settled the accounts, which would now have been more difficult to have accomplished than ever. Adieu; my heart is full. I can only add that I will write you as soon as I arrive, and that I am, dear Charles,

Yours, &c.,  
J. R.

Mr. Reed hastened to London as rapidly as the travelling processes of eighty years ago permitted. There he found that death was not the only calamity which had befallen those he loved so well. Commercial embarrassment and ruin had visited them, and Mr. De Berdt's mercantile house was bankrupt—made bankrupt, too, by the remissness, if not dishonesty, of American traders. Mr. Reed thus describes the scene of ruin and distress in which he found himself. Instead of the welcome of joyous friends, there was desolation, and sorrow, and disappointment at the fireside that was once so happy.



MR. REED TO MR. PETTIT.

London, May 7th, 1770.

I came here from Ireland a few days ago ; but what shall I say with respect to my future views and prospects, which, I trust, are interesting to you ? I found my worthy friend gone, my dear girl almost worn out with sorrow and fatigue, and the whole family in a situation not to be described. I am again embarked on a sea of disappointments and difficulties, and seem ever destined for the school of affliction ; but I am wrong in sending my melancholy sensations across the Atlantic when I cannot have the benefit of your advice and assistance. I wrote to you from Dublin an account of Mr. De Berdt's death, which seems to have happened from a mere decay of nature, quite exhausted and worn out. He has given little attention to business for some time past, and at last went out like an expiring taper. Upon a review of his affairs, there appears an overplus of some thousands, which is scattered through America. Mrs. De Berdt, her son, and a friend of the family, are appointed executors, who have had a meeting of the creditors, to lay before them a state of the affairs, and convince them of the necessity there is that they should wait with patience for American remittances. As yet, all has been serene and friend-



ly; but you may easily judge, my dear sir, what must have been the feelings of the family at a step of this kind, and to live as it were pensioners on the bounty of others, for so the creditors esteem it; American debts being in very low estimation here. Mrs. De Berdt has laid down her coach, and my dear girl, though I think it necessary for health that she should ride, yet could not be prevailed on to keep a horse for that purpose.

We have had very wrong ideas of the advantages of American trade, and Mr. De Berdt has been peculiarly unhappy in his Philadelphia correspondents, even among our own particular friends. I am now extremely sorry that I settled the Philadelphia accounts, for upon a review of the books, it appears that we have done it at a very considerable loss, and it will be necessary to take them up again, or the family be cruelly injured. I hope there is yet so much virtue and justice left among them as to do it, otherwise the consequences will be terrible indeed. . . It is indeed a melancholy scene, to look through the books of this house, which show a very handsome fortune acquired, and, I fear, lost again, by credulity on the part of Mr. De Berdt, and dishonesty on the part of many of our countrymen. A trust is talked of, which has a disagreeable sound, but in this case has some advantages, as Mr. Burkitt and Mr. Sayre



will be rid of the house on which they are at present incumbrances, but I think you may make use of these circumstances to stimulate our friends to exert themselves to save a family whose welfare or ruin really depends on their generous and grateful efforts.

I have not been able to fix upon anything in these few days. Indeed I have hardly recovered the surprise and shock which all these circumstances have given me. Mrs. De Berdt and her daughter have consented to go to America if it appears necessary, but I doubt whether the former would be happy there. A change so material at her time of life must be disagreeable.

I have been with Mr. Morgan, who continues to profess great friendship, though I fancy at the expiration of nine months will leave the office open to a higher bidder.\* . . We are going to lay a memorial before Lord Hillsborough, touching the law brought up in the Fall Sessions. Mr. Morgan seems quite dependent on Ministry, and what is a little unhappy, his patron, Lord Shelburne, has little prospect of coming in again. A bill is brought into the House of Commons to grant the Province of

\* Not probably in money, though it was the day of jobs, but in adhesion to the Ministry.



New York an emission of paper money. How they have happened to gain this preference I have yet to learn. Very considerable quantities of goods have been shipped this spring to Virginia and Boston, so that our agreement for non-importation is considered a mere bagatelle. The reception of these goods will in a great measure determine our fate. Mr. Haley, Mr. Hancock's friend, has shipped very largely, and says he will execute any orders sent him. I am well satisfied from all accounts that the manufacturers do not yet feel;—the demands from Russia, an increased demand from Germany, and what is extremely probable, some of the public money employed in keeping the manufacturers at work. This conjecture is founded on Bacon Durand's, (?) with several other merchants on the ministerial side, who never were known before as American merchants, shipping large quantities of goods to America. It is no secret here that the malt ship went by way of experiment, and that her owner was indemnified fully. All these circumstances have unhappily conspired to oppose the effect of our resolutions, so that America has few resources but what she must draw from her own prudence and virtue, which will prevail in the end.

Dr. Franklin is very much broken, and has been



laid up with the gout for many weeks. He appears extremely reserved, though I am informed that is his general character here. He seems to despair of any further redress of American grievances, and, indeed, I believe, has been hard pushed to preserve that caution and address which are necessary for him in the difficult characters of Agent and Crown Officer. The merchants here know little of our affairs, and care less than they know. Politics are quite out of their way. Indeed, at present I have little heart to enter into them.

The rest of this portion of my story is easily told. In fact, it is comprised in the brief entry that now lies before me, in Mr. Reed's family Bible. It is in his well-known and graceful handwriting.

“JOSEPH and ESTHER REED, married at St. Luke's Church, in the city of London, 22d May, 1770.”

And, on the 8th of June, the bride writes her first letter to her husband's American family, in the form of a brief postscript to Mrs. Pettit.



Though with a strange mixture of concern and pleasure, yet I would not neglect, dear madam, to pay the tribute of affection and respect which is due to a sister of my dear Mr. Reed, and who, by the event of last week, I have a right to call mine. Some circumstances have occurred to damp the pleasure I have in giving my hand where my heart has long been. However, I hope that, by a constant life of endeavor to make Mr. Reed happy, and the warmth of affection I feel for all those that are dear to him, I shall in some measure repay his anxiety and tenderness, and I shall esteem myself very happy to enjoy your love and friendship. I am, with the greatest truth,

Yours most affectionately,

ESTHER REED.

So ended a long and anxious courtship. And now that I have brought my little narrative to this point, I am not disposed to repress the thoughts which a minute study of the whole correspondence, —more minute, of course, than the reader can pretend to,—has suggested. The review of it all has been to me the source of great and most rational enjoyment. It has been a source of pleasure in this, that I fancy I can detect in the training which



these lovers of former days underwent, the development of fine traits of character in after-life. The separation of five long years at so vast a distance, was no easy trial. The ocean was wider then than now; its perils and difficulties more formidable. The truth is, that to marry an American, eighty years ago, must have seemed more inappropriate, for a gentle and refined British maiden, than now-a-days it would be for a New York or Philadelphia young lady to follow the fortunes of a California settler, or an emigrant to Oregon. And the woman whose fidelity to a lover thus distant never wavered, triumphed through trials such as this day's constancy is rarely subjected to. But it is clear, from every word in all this accumulation of correspondence, that she loved with a faith so sincere, so strongly anchored, that the idea of infidelity, of a wandering thought or wish on his part or hers, was inconceivable. Time, distance, adversity, no counter-influence weakened their mutual love. It lasted for five years without a whisper of distrust or discontent. It ended in a marriage which was rich in every domestic blessing, though strangely chequered by out-of-door adversity. Its record, to my mind, is most attractive, and I have made poor use of it, indeed, if those



few who kindly read what I have thus rapidly written, do not find some little interest in it.

I now come to the history of ten years of married life,—and those, too, years of civil war and confusion.



## CHAPTER IX.

1770-1771.

*Philadelphia Eighty years ago—Removal from New Jersey—Mrs. Reed's Letters to her friends in England—Her description of Colonial Life—Correspondence from America—Birth of her first child.*

It is not easy for us, Americans and Philadelphians of this day, residents of a large and luxurious community—for such at least by contrast it is—to understand what America and Philadelphia seemed to an English stranger eighty years ago. The “fringe” of civilization on the Colonial seaboard was very narrow; for though at this point on the Continent, scattered military settlements extended to the Ohio, a hostile Indian population was as near as the Susquehanna to the west, and the Lehigh to the north. Philadelphia, with its population of not more than fifteen or twenty thousand, was but a large village, with village habits and



modes of life. The houses did not reach farther than Delaware Third or Fourth Streets, with the Hospital Woods at what is now Eighth Street, and gentlemen's seats in the country this side of the Schuylkill. For all articles of luxury, and even many of necessity, the Colonies were dependent on the "Old Country," and the few ships which periodically and deliberately crossed the Atlantic, were freighted with hats and shoes, and pins and needles, and clothing of all kinds, that in our day it is strange to read of. To this primitive community came, from the refinements of the great Metropolis of the world, the young English bride. Mr. and Mrs. Reed, accompanied by Mrs. De Berdt, arrived at Philadelphia in the ship *Pennsylvania Packet*, Captain Osborne, on the 26th of October, 1770. Soon after,—the arrangements probably having been made in advance, Mr. Reed changed his residence from Trenton to this city; for in the first letters to her friends in England, Mrs. Reed speaks of Philadelphia as her home.\* I copy a few extracts from their letters, as the genuine record of a

\* Among the records of the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County, is this entry: "December Term, 1770. Upon motion of Nicholas Waln, Esq., Joseph Reed, Esq., is admitted and sworn as an Attorney of this Court."



first impression. They are addressed to her brother, for whose success in life she seems to have been deeply solicitous, and to whom she always writes with clear good sense, and now matronly intelligence. The letters, it will be seen, are no longer love-letters. They are the letters of a happy wife, clinging with more devotion to her husband, because she was in a land of strangers, and, aside from him, felt deeply solitude and separation from her ancient home. No one, however, can fail being struck, in the progress of the correspondence, with the growing contentment it developes with her new home, and how, as her children were born and grew up around her, she became more than reconciled to the place of their nativity, and, woman-like, forgot in the new relation of wife and mother, the associations of her girlhood. Long before war and bloodshed aroused the land, Esther De Berdt had become in spirit and truth an American woman.

The reader of our day will smile at the Dancing Assembly of ancient times, and the Burlington fox hunt described in Mrs. Reed's first letter.



MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT, LONDON.

Philadelphia, Nov. 14th, 1770.

The more I see of the people here, the more I am convinced, a knowledge of merchants' accounts is absolutely necessary before anything can be done in business. Men in trade here are cheerful and gay at their tables, and acute men of business in their counting-houses and stores, so that without a perfect and accurate knowledge of accounts and exchange, a person would soon become ridiculous, and could stand no chance of carrying on business; but, with a proper knowledge, I think a good stroke might be struck, though not in the common way of importing, but in the manner, Mr. Reed used to mention, of little things out of the common road that come cheap. Miss Pearson is making a fortune by going to England and bringing back new fashions in her way. Articles for gentlemen's use, would answer as well; as to the common articles of wear, the country will soon be overstocked; vast quantities of goods come already from New York and Maryland, and all the country people are spinning coarse linen, which they find their account in. I believe when Mr. Reed



finds you have applied closely, and are fit to deal with these sharp tradesmen, he will exert his name and interest to do you any essential service that lies in his power. He often says he would do as much for you as for his own brother. Everything on the passage was on the whole as agreeable as possible, but I was worn almost to a skeleton by the constant sickness, but America has set me up again; yet, though I was so glad to see land, the first week or two, I was very low-spirited;—indeed it is not England:—however, I can think of spending some time agreeably enough. Nothing can be more obliging than our friends; they seem to strive which can show most hospitality and respect. I am sure, after the first weeks, you would like this place very well:—the city does not answer my expectations;—the plan, undoubtedly, is remarkably good; but the houses are low, and in general, paltry, in comparison of the account I had heard. Our little friend Powell cuts the greatest figure in houses; his is very elegant, and those he builds are very pretty. We made our appearance on Thursday at the Assembly, with Mrs. Foxcroft, and my ladyship opened the ball, much to the satisfaction of the company, as something new to criticise on. The belles of the city were there. In general, the ladies are pretty, but no



beauties ; they all stoop, like country girls. So much for this city. I have spent a fortnight at the city of Burlington, which is remarkable for nothing. Governor Franklin tells me that a person may sleep there for a month, without any danger of being disturbed. I was much diverted with what they called a "hunt." The people, the horses, and dogs, were well matched. The first at setting out was a black man, on a horse whose coat stood about two inches from his body ;—three gentlemen attended, —one was the apothecary, another the Mayor, and the third (illegible), all on horses about as high as my old Fanny, and with the same porcupine appearance as the first ;—however, about noon they returned, with a fine fox, and well satisfied.

In the next two letters, along with some incidental allusions to Boston politics, are strong indications of home-sickness, discontent with her social relations in this country, and anxiety to see "dear England" once more. Agencies and Secretaryships were still floating in the imagination of the young wife.



MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, December 12, 1770.

I wrote to my dear Dennis not long since by Captain Osborne, but opportunities occur so seldom at this time of the year, that I just write a few lines by way of Bristol, as I know how anxious you are to hear constantly from us, and we no less so to hear from you. Nothing has occurred particular since I wrote. I begin to grow very anxious to receive some intelligence from you. No ships are expected till spring, so that our only hope is by the packet. America, my dear Dennis, is a fine country, but to compare it to England in any respect, except the clear weather, is wrong, for it will not bear the most distant comparison: however, with the hope of returning, I can spend some time here without repining, and with the hope of seeing you here, I keep up my spirits. When you are perfect master of merchants' accounts, I think something may be done either here or in England: these sentiments I wrote you in my last letter. Mr. Cox is engaged in a large iron work, the produce of which is to be sent to England. Mr. Reed intends speaking to him to send to you to insure it, and as I believe



some is to come to London, perhaps he may consign it to you; but I don't know how that matter stands: however, Mr. Reed will do everything he can for you. If you have any business to transact for Mr. Cox, you cannot be too careful and exact, as he is quite the man of business, and so remarkable for conducting it with circumspection and care, that whatever is done for him must be made the most of, and be done completely and correctly; if anything of this sort should happen, much depends upon it: however, it is only a conjecture of my own at present; it shall be real if possible. You have this much in your favor, that the horrible faults committed in conducting the last partnership business are all laid at Sayre's door, so that you have no difficulties in that respect, and you have only a character to support as an honest man, and capable of business. Much depends on your conduct at the present time. Mr. Reed lately received a letter from Mr. Cary, in which he informs him of the House of Assembly having voted the sum due for my dear father's Agency, and that as soon as the accounts of four houses came in, it would be immediately paid. I was much surprised at the choice of Dr. Franklin. Mr. Cary writes word that the choice would certainly have fallen on Mr. Reed if



he had tarried in England. I cannot help sometimes regretting ; but, on the whole, I believe it is best as it is ; it would have been a dreadful uncertainty, depending on the caprice of men who have shown temper so often, and would have kept us in too constant an anxiety. Mr. Reed wrote to Mr. Cary very strongly in favor of Dr. Lee, who, it is thought, would have been chosen instead of Franklin, if they had known his Christian name. I imagine by Mr. Reed's means he will have it without doubt next year, which will give me much pleasure. You must by no means depend on what I have said about Mr. Cox's iron, as I never heard it so much as hinted at, and I imagine Mr. Reed will be very cautious in recommending any step of that kind to Mr. Cox, as he is remarkably sanguine in his expectations, and till he is convinced that you are more capable of transacting business than it was possible for you to be, under the tuition of our counting-house. If Mr. Uffington should mark out any such plan, I hope you would not refuse it from false pride, as every young man, even supposing he had a fortune, must learn business if he intends to practise it, and the counting-house you have been used to always tended to unhinge a man from the proper method of trade : the longer I am



acquainted with men here, I see it is impossible to think of business without a certain knowledge of it, which must be attained. For the present, my dear Dennis, adieu! My dear Mr. Reed joins in the most affectionate wishes for your welfare.

I am ever, most sincerely,

Yours,

E. REED.

P. S. I will just repeat the things I mentioned for you to buy for me:—A fine damask table-cloth, largest size, price £1 1s., and one of the next size; a very neat fan (leather mount, if it is to be had), handsome for the price, if not, paper,—the sticks not very broad, the fan middling size, a guinea, or 25s.; set of dressing-boxes, the largest box in the shape of a fan, not too many in a set. Perhaps I have forgot some things here which I mentioned in my former letter, but if that comes to hand, you will buy all I have sent for, and I add, needles, from No. 5 to No. 11, a paper of each, a hundred in a paper, a packet of short ——— and a packet of middling pins—a packet, I believe, has four papers in each,—I think the best may be bought of Price. I would give something to be in Price's or Mr. Anybody's shop in London, even in Thames Street. To



my great consolation, here is a street in Philadelphia very like Thames Street, and I rejoice when I can go that way. Captain More is arrived in Maryland, and has sailed for this port, but not yet arrived. Once more, adieu ! Pray buy the post-chariot neat, and painted in taste, and it's very necessary the harness should be neat, as we shall want something to set off the horses.

Again she writes, a month later, a little restless at the gossiping provincialism of her new residence.

MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, January 17th, 1771.

MY DEAR DENNIS :

We were very happy in hearing from you by the Packet. We are just settled in a good house and warm, which is very necessary, as the winter seems now to be just set in. The weather has been remarkably fine till a snow, which fell yesterday, and threatened us with a severe spell. I am very glad the Admiral is so obliging, though I much question his lending you money, though that, by the by. Remember me very affectionately to them all. The



people here seem to make themselves quite easy about paying their debts; they smile in our faces and invite us to dinner, and then think we are obliged to them. But Mr. R. intends upon his return to make a bustle among them; the attachments are a fine excuse for them. Dr. Lee's manner of behaving is most extraordinary.\* I must leave it to Mr. R. to settle the matter. I am sure the Doctor is obliged to him entirely for his interest at Boston, and Mr. Reed wrote so much in his favor, that I dare say he will have the Agency next year; he only reserved an interest for himself in his letter to Mr. Cary, and told him he had not given over thoughts of returning to England himself, when he hoped his years and experience would give him more weight, but this is more than he dare say in this place, and it is only to be known to a few, or them at a distance. We meet with much

\* I have no means of knowing to what this alludes. On the 18th January, 1771, Arthur Lee had written a letter of most earnest friendliness to Mr. Reed (*Reed's Memoirs*, vol. i. 43). "I had very little doubt," he says, "notwithstanding Mrs. Reed's prepossessions, her being well satisfied and pleased with America. I cannot think either of the ladies will regret London, as you settle in Philadelphia, which, with all our elegancies, has much more virtue."



civility, but I can't say the place suits me very well ; the people must either talk of their neighbors, of whom they know every particular, of what they both do and say, or else of marketing, two subjects I am very little acquainted with ; this I only say to you, for we hardly dare tell one another our thoughts, lest it should spread and be told again all over the town ; so, if anybody asks you how we like Philadelphia, you must say very well. Mamma is very well ; her only anxiety is concerning you, which indeed is sometimes very great ; however, we keep up her spirits as well as we can, by making her life easy and happy.

On the 4th of May, in anticipation of her first confinement, she writes in a tone of anxiety and melancholy solicitude, sustained as ever by strong religious sentiment, and the devoted love of her husband.

MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, 4th May, 1771.

I have more commissions for you, but I defer them till the event of a few weeks is known. My health has continued with very little inter-



ruption ever since I have been here. I can't now expect to keep up much longer. My spirits are as tolerable as I could expect, though sometimes they seem as if they would fail. They are indeed supported by the most endearing and constant attention and kindness which my heart can wish. Everything my love for my dear Mr. Reed made me expect, his tenderness fulfils. I sometimes draw an unfavorable omen from our happiness, that it must meet with some alloy. I suspect my own heart, that it is too much attached and engaged, but I endeavor to restrain it from this sinful error, and resign myself, my dearest friends, both on this and your side of the water, to the unerring and kind Disposer of all things, trusting in his almighty power for support under those burdens which he lays upon us. May he bless my dear brother."

Soon after her daughter was born—a delicate sickly child;\* and on the 15th June, though scarcely recovered from the severity of illness, Mrs. Reed, with the fore-cast of a new and anxious mother, writes:

\* Martha Reed, who, all her life an invalid, died at Burlington in 1821.



“Though my hand trembles a little, I have great reason to be thankful, as I have no complaint but remaining weakness;” and adds, “dear mother sits by me, and sends her tenderest love to you. She is very busy nursing her grand-daughter. I believe I shall make a good nurse, and I think I shall like my little girl very well by and by. If she lives, it will make me more anxious than ever to return to dear England, as the education of girls is very indifferent indeed here. I assure my dear Dennis I find this country and England two different places; however, for the present we must be content.”



## CHAPTER X.

1772.

*Correspondence continued—A colonial Lawyer's life—Galloway—Dickinson—Chew and Waln—Lord Dartmouth's Reappointment as Secretary of State—Plans for returning to England.*

As time advanced, and her husband's professional prospects in his new abode brightened, the hopes of getting back to "dear England" seemed to abate. A letter in the beginning of 1772, besides the indication of this gradual and almost unconscious change of feeling, has some details of the Philadelphia lawyers of those days that are curious.

MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, Feb. 29th, 1772.

After a long silence, your letter of the 6th December came to my hand, which wears a style of



gloominess which I wish it was in my power wholly to remove, but it is impossible for me to say positively that we shall return to England. It is a matter of uncertainty, but yet I am not without hopes, such as I would not part with for a great deal, that that happy time will arrive. We could not expect business or any other circumstances to be more promising than they are. Providence has remarkably favored our settling in this place.\* Out of the four greatest lawyers in the city, three have resigned practice. Mr. Galloway, being a good deal advanced in life, and having a very large fortune, cares very little about it. Mr. Dickinson, also, married a wife worth £30,000, is improving and building on his estate, and Mr. Waln, whom you may remember in the Temple with Mr. Reed, is, on a sudden, turned Quaker preacher. He had very great business—they say near £2000 a year, but he has resigned on principle, as he says no good man can practise law. However wrong these sentiments, I cannot say I am sorry they influence him just at this time. Mr. Chew has recovered his health per-

\* The Philadelphia Lawyers here enumerated were Joseph Galloway, John Dickinson, Nicholas Waln, and Benjamin Chew, gentlemen well known in political and professional life, both in colony times and afterwards.



fectly, and practises as usual, but he cannot be on both sides of a question. Youngsters in the law are very plentiful,—some very indifferent,—others whose friends and connexions will do much for them, but an acquired reputation is worth it all. . . . When I lay all these circumstances together, I can't help drawing a favorable conclusion that a few years will enable us to gratify our favorite wish, for I must say that England has charms that time does not wear off. A large family, if it should happen, will be a heavy weight, and I sometimes can't help a wish that Providence would find some settlement for you here, for I must say, if you was with us, I should lose one of my greatest attractions there.

A letter a few months later, shows that her pen was sometimes used to lighten the labors of her lawyer husband. "I have but just time," she says (April, 1772), "to write a few lines, as I have not quite left off my old occupation, for I am now private secretary, and copy letters which do not appear in the office. . . . Oh! my dear brother, how do I wish that the prospect of meeting again, not to be separated, was clear;\* however, I do not despair; while there is nothing impossible in the

\* I may here note that Mrs. Reed never again saw the brother whom she so loved. Mr. De Berdt lived and died in England.



way, I will hope. I cannot say America is agreeable ; the climate I dislike very much. I should be very glad to change this fine sky for our heavy one. There is so much clear, burning sunshine in the three summer months, that I do not wish for any more all the year. Mr. Reed will be glad you will send him all the new law books, which are recommended by those that understand the matter. Dr. Lee will be a good person to inquire of."

MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, October 12th, 1772.

I have now to acknowledge two of my dear Dennis's kind letters:—how important are these messengers, and how rejoicing to an affectionate heart, when they bring glad tidings of your health and welfare. I thank God for his kind Providence that has continued yours, and that is brightening your prospects:—the same kind hand has watched over us, and as a peculiar instance of it, I can inform you that I have passed through another scene of trial, and am recovered to perfect health and strength. I think I never enjoyed a greater share of health and spirits ; nothing is wanting but clearer prospects of returning to dear England ; it would



indeed rejoice my heart, once more to set my foot on that charming island. America must be allowed to be a fine country, but the conveniences and elegancies of England are unrivalled ; they are not to be expected here ; but I make myself contented. At present, we are in no small anxiety about our two dear children, as they are both inoculated, and we expect them to sicken every hour. Before this vessel sails, I hope to tell you they are in a fair way of recovery. Mr. Reed sent your letters and patterns to New York some time ago, so that I hope you will have some orders from there very soon. I am glad to find your connexion with Mr. Baillie so considerable ; that business has answered from a quarter we least expected. The consignments to our worthy friend Cary are, I believe, very agreeable, as they are quite in his way of business. Mr. Rudgrave gave your letter to one of the principal members of the Lower Counties Assembly, who said they had no business to be transacted in England, but when they had, he dare say they would have no objection to letting it pass through your hands. I hope to send you this fall, some cranberries and some sturgeon, and if possible, some venison hams ; but they are now become so scarce that it is difficult to procure any. I did not think the sum to Mr. Budd had been so



considerable. I should be glad you inquire into the particulars, and if they appear reasonable and fair, pay him immediately. I shall have some commissions for you to send in the spring vessels; if I have not time to recollect them now, I will, by Osborne, who sails in little time. I am glad you have made so agreeable a tour to Birmingham, and as it answered your own design as to pleasure, I hope it will, as to business. It gives me pleasure to hear our friend G. Russell is so happily settled. I have a great regard for him, as he always behaved very well. I am sorry Mrs. Lyttleton (Lady, perhaps, by this time), has sacrificed so much to her ambition.\* I fear her views of grandeur have quite overcome those of happiness; but she must, as well as her

\* Married, July 8th, 1772, the Hon. Mr. Lyttleton, only son of Lord Lyttleton, to Mrs. Apphia Peach, widow of the late Colonel Peach, in the East India Company's service. This was the second and notorious Lord Lyttleton, who succeeded his father in 1773, and died in 1779. In the Annual Register of 1840—in my day and generation—I find this obituary, "Died, April 11th, 1840, at Great Malvern, aged 96, the Right Hon. Apphia, Lady Lyttleton, widow of Thomas, second Lord Lyttleton. With means comparatively slender, she was eminently charitable. The schools founded by her, the public walks laid out and improved, and the house of industry, are standing monuments of her beneficent disposition."



friends, make the best of it. Your account of Mrs. Sabine's manner of life, is truly amiable and consistent with her character and conduct, which was always lovely; but of this I would not say more. Mr. Cox is extremely pleased with your conduct with regard to his consignments, and your punctuality in writing, and he speaks very highly of your manner of conducting business. Your pursuing your first laid plan of economy so closely gives us great pleasure, as it is the road to make your advancement as sure as human prudence can; but I am a little surprised at Mr. Uffington's proposing for you to take his youngest son, as it would never have reclaimed him. So young a master could not have had sufficient influence over him, and he could be of no service to you. I am very sorry he has been obliged to send him so far from him. Of all afflictions, a bad child is certainly the greatest. Mr. Reed has wrote you, long since, how far his guarantee should extend; as to any engagement with Mr. Cox and Mr. Rhea, he has entered into none, but with regard to honesty and care, I believe they never desired any other. You will also receive some potash from another person here. I hope you find the commission considerable. Pray, do you do Mr. Cox's business on lower terms than five per cent.?



I think you once offered it under the common commissions, which I am sorry for, as there was no making another bargain after you had once offered it. I enclose you a lock of hair and size of the finger to have a ring made; the hair to be worked in as neat and elegant as you can, and set with garnets or rubies, or anything that will look genteel and pretty, not to exceed in price two guineas and a half; if you can get it done for less, to be handsome, but don't exceed that; it is the hair of a young lady, a very intimate friend of Mr. Reed's sister, who died last summer. Have wrote on the ring "Eleanor Montgomery, died July 3d, 1772, aged 18." Send me 4 pr. of Bk. Calma shoes, and desire Mr. Chamberlain to sticth them, and not bind them as he did the last. A dozen of 8 bowed cap wires; a cap for Patty, such as a child two years old should wear. If they are what they call quilted caps, send two, as I cannot get any such here; a quartered cap for my boy, a half-dressed handkerchief or tippet, or whatever is the fashion, for myself, made of thread lace. Also a handsome spring silk, fit for summer, and new fashion. I leave it to your taste to choose it for me. I would not have rich silk. You know I do not like anything very gay, but neat and genteel. Send it to Long's warehouse



to be made up, and trimmed or not, as the present taste requires. If you call there they will tell you how much it will take. Buy the quantity, but cut off half a yard and send it to me with the gown: if you give them all, I shall never see an inch of it. By Osborne, I will send you a gown to be dyed any color it will take best.\* Thus far my commissions run at present. Remember me very affectionately to all friends, especially Mrs. Wood, whom I can't help pitying, as I fear her delicate constitution must suffer a great deal from such repeated trials. Mamma intends writing by Osborne, who will sail in about ten days. She has been unwell, but is now, thank God, much better. Adieu, my dear Dennis. I shall write you again by one of the fall vessels. May the best of blessings ever be yours. I am,

Your truly affectionate,

E. REED.

MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, October 20th, 1772.

You will no doubt hear of the failure of a very considerable house in New York: it seems to have

\* All these minute commissions show how helpless and dependent these Colonies then were.



been very unexpected, as they were in great credit. Many failures are expected here; the city is so much overstocked with goods, that in many shops you may buy cheaper than in London, and the needy trader is constantly obliged for the sake of ready cash to send his goods (often bales unopened), to vendue, where they sometimes sell under prime cost, which is productive of universal bad consequences. I have made some inquiries about Neave's correspondents, and find that his best had left him, and settled in other hands long before he failed. I was in hopes the probability of — obtaining his grant would have prevented his affairs being exposed. The young man I mentioned in Virginia is not yet quite settled: he made some beginning in a ship which was unfortunately lost, but he is not yet fixed;—he was an apprentice of Mr. Cox. You may be sure of his interest and his recommendation, which will have more weight than any one's else. I am very glad to hear Lord Dartmouth has taken Lord Hillsborough's place; he was certainly a real friend of our dear father, and I dare say will further the payment of his salary.\* I wish

\* Lord Dartmouth resumed his former position as Secretary of State for the Colonies, in August, 1772, and continued in office till 1775.



some use could be made of him to advance that foremost wish of our hearts to spend the remainder of our lives together. I think with you it is not so much matter where as when : if any place should fall vacant, I think you might use our father's interest for yourself : it is a little unlucky that the best offices are just now afresh filled up here, but some others may happen, which if they should, we will let you know immediately. Do tell us whether he is likely to be a fixed Minister, or only put in to stop the gap. I a little suspect the latter ; if so, any place of Secretary under him, could it be obtained for my dear Mr. Reed, would be too uncertain an interest, as his situation here now is pretty certain with respect to income, and it rather increases than otherwise ; but if he is likely to be settled, I could wish something of that sort would turn up ; but it must be something likely to be of some continuance, that would tempt him, or rather that would be prudent for him to accept. He has this last week tried two causes that have gained him considerable applause as a speaker ; in short, there is but one person (Mr. Chew) who can make much figure against him, as they are almost all youngsters. Mr. Reed is very much out of favor with Mr. Allen, who is the Judge of the Court here, for no



other reason than that he thinks he will stand in the way of his two sons, who have just taken it into their heads to be great lawyers. You may remember how differently they studied when they were in the Temple; but it is no great matter, as their fortune will excuse their want of application.

We have not yet had the box from on board the vessel: the basket we have opened; the walnuts are very fine indeed, but they come to more money than I expected;—who did you buy them of? I think they must have imposed on you; however, they are a great rarity here. The lamps, if we can manage them, will be of great use in summer, and perhaps will do to write by in the office; the hammer-cloth will be of little use, as we do not use the box: perhaps, as it is so handsome, it may tempt us to drive with it; if not, I dare say we can dispose of it.\* If Miss M. Palmer's bandbox contains a handkerchief, as I imagine it does, you

\* In the MS. collection of Simitiere, in the Philadelphia Library, is a list of the persons who kept carriages in 1772. The number is 86. Mr. Reed's equipage must, by comparison, have been a very modest one. In John Adams's Diary, 31st August, 1774, he says, "Mr. Dickinson, 'The Farmer of Pennsylvania,' came in his coach with four beautiful horses to Mr. Ward's lodgings to see us."



need not send the one I wrote for in my last letter, if you have not already bespoke it. The caps for Patty I would not have you purchase of Miss Gabbells,—the ones you sent last year were made of such bad materials that they are now of no use. Remember our compliments to them, as I shall always regard them for their care and attention to you. To my other commission, I add a box of ivory letters for Patty, and a hat or cap for my son, fit for a child of a year old. I don't like hussar caps and feathers; it must be something genteel, like a gentleman's child, not a butcher's. The gown I proposed to send for, I find I can have done here, and as it is not worth much, I shan't take the trouble of sending. I have been confined the week past with my dear children, and the nursery has been almost all my care; they are both likely to do very well, and have the small-pox very favorably. You see I have fulfilled your wish of a son.\* I wish I could stop with that number, but I don't expect that.

\* My father, Joseph Reed, was born on the 10th July, 1772. He died at Philadelphia, on the 4th March, 1846, and is buried at Laurel Hill. To him, and his guidance in my childhood, to his almost sleepless vigilance over my education, I owe everything. He was to me



Mr. Rhea is at present confined with the gout. I have communicated the scheme of queensware to him, and he promised me to write you his sentiments, which I think are in favor of it.\* I keep my letter open to enclose his; if he can't write now, you shall have his opinion and directions by the next vessels, which will sail in about a fortnight, and by them, Mr. Reed will write you himself. My affectionate remembrance attends all those my friends that so kindly inquire after me, especially to my aunt Fouke and family, Mrs. Wood, etc. Adieu for the present, my dear Dennis. My wishes and prayers join with yours that we may meet soon again, and I am,

Ever most affectionately,

Yours,

E. REED.

After the interval of a year—the intermediate correspondence relating to matters of domestic

and to my brothers and sisters always gentle, affectionate, and, in its true sense, dutiful.

\* Mr. John Rhea was a merchant of Philadelphia in his day of high repute. I have in my possession, having recovered it by accident, a cane surmounted by a large American agate, with this inscription, "J. Rhea to J. Reed, Amicitia."



detail, of no interest,—Mrs. Reed again writes on her familiar prospects. It is the last letter of this description I think worth quoting, before the opening of the Revolution, which was so rudely to break all relations of affection to the mother country—no longer “dear England.”

MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, October 28th, 1773.\*

I have two or three of my dear brother's kind letters by me to answer; his last of the 12th August, I just now received, which has accounted for not having one by Sutton, at which I was a little disappointed, and fully intended to chide you for; but though I don't for that, I must for your suffering two out of three London vessels to sail without a line, that had it not been for a letter by one of them from young Ingersoll,† we should have been

\* On 18th January, 1773, Arthur Lee writes from London to Mr. Reed, “I dare say the ladies hardly think of poor old England any longer. It is more natural to worship the rising than the setting sun, and certainly America is the former.” The rest of this letter is at p. 47 of vol. I. Life of Reed.

† Jared Ingersoll, who afterwards married Mr. Reed's half-niece, Miss Pettit. He was then studying in the Temple.



very uneasy, as every circumstance is alarming, and every omission of that kind raises a thousand fears while we are at so great a distance, that you must always write a line, if it is only to say that you intend writing by the other ship. I think I have not wrote you since yours in which you mention the design you had of inviting our dear mamma back to England, which, though it is pleasing in idea, and arises in your mind from the best motive, that of making her life happy, yet, I am fully persuaded, would not answer to realize or succeed in the view you intend; and I am very glad nothing was mentioned to her on the subject, as it would have turned her thoughts so much on it as they perhaps might not have been easily diverted; she sometimes hints such a thing to me, perhaps she has said more in her letters to you; but I know her situation is as easy and independent as it can be, and our children add so much to her happiness and amusement, that I'm persuaded a change would be for the worse, as, supposing you to continue single, she must of course be too much alone; and if you marry, it is more than probable everything might not be agreeable to all parties, and a separation from us both would make her miserable. I tell you, my dear Dennis, my sentiments freely on this sub-



ject, that you may at least postpone your invitation for the present. You also ask me what are Mr. Reed's views and intentions as to returning to England; this is a difficult question for me to answer, and indeed I believe it would be as difficult for him, as it is not possible for him to form any intention concerning it, as everything, while his life and abilities last, is promising here, and there is no prospect for him there: but yet, as far as I can judge, if he should acquire a handsome independent fortune, he would willingly spend and enjoy it in England: but so many circumstances must unite to bring this about, and so many may arise to overturn it, that nothing can be said on the subject of any consequence, or to build upon. I should be very happy indeed, my dear Dennis, at the prospect of our spending our future lives together; it always seems as a cruel something wanting in my happiness, that we are so widely separated, and nothing lies with so much weight on my heart. I have turned over in my mind every scheme I could invent, and none appears to me so promising as the one I have so frequently mentioned, that of getting a partner to reside in London, and then I think it very likely in a few years you might find your interest as well served by settling here as in England, if you liked



this country, which I do not think you would till after the first twelvemonths, as it differs very much from England; but I think after once used to it, you would find your life very happy here. Think of this, my dear Dennis; it seems to me to have the fairest prospect; but while I am talking, Mr. Reed tells me that he shall write you word that he thinks nothing can be done to purpose with regard to settling a good correspondence without your coming over yourself, as the people don't pay much attention to his applications: this you cannot do without some very careful person to leave your business with, and none would be likely to answer so well as one interested in it, that I think you must seriously attend to the partnership scheme, but Mr. Reed will write you fully on this head. But, to leave every other subject, what must we say to our old friend Sayre? Certainly never was anything stranger or more unaccountable. Every person here is as much astonished as we were:—a remark which one gentleman made, is, I think, a very just one. “I see,” says he, “what ignorance and impudence will do in London;”—certainly these two qualities had some hand in his advancement. Pray do send me word how he goes on, and if the bank succeeds: we have heard that it was never opened. I think he will yet fall to the ground unless he has recourse



to matrimony, and if he does not make haste, that will not succeed, as his beauty must be pretty well faded. However, I must leave him, wishing very much his heart and life mended with his fortune. If you ever see Dr. Ruston, I think he might be reminded of his debt to the old house. Mamma has wrote you a full account of the family and estate in Ypres; it is an extraordinary incident, and I think deserves to be attended to. I assure you I have some expectations from it; it happened within so short a time. I wish we were in England, that Mr. Reed might help to unriddle the difficulty of it,—don't you? Pray send us word how you proceed in it. I have not many commissions this fall. For myself you may send a neat cap, fit for a genteel half-dress,—you can pack it with Miss Watson's,—and another hat for my boy; he will be by that time near two years old; the other was rather too large in the crown. You must remember to tell the person it must be rather a small size for that age, as you cannot imagine our children are young Patagonians. I must now bid you adieu for this time, which I do with great regret, though I have wrote so long a letter. You *must come* to America. I long to see you, my dear Dennis, more than ever, but I dare not think much about it, lest some acci-



dent should prevent you ; and even if you should, the idea of your returning damps my pleasure ; but I will not think of that, but dwell on the thoughts of bidding you welcome here, and the joy that will on that occasion rise in the heart of

Your ever affectionate

E. REED.

The letter referred to in the above about our Flemish ancestry, is as follows :

MRS. DE BERDT, THE ELDER, TO MR. DE BERDT.

Endorsed Philadelphia, Received November, 1774.

I will give my dear Dennis the best account I can of his dear father's family.

The original of them came from Ipres (or Ypres) in Flanders. They left that country for the sake of religion, where they were persecuted by Duke Alva. They left behind them a good estate ; and brought with them only some money and jewels, which was by stealth. I have often heard your dear father mention the circumstances. Mr. De Berdt had married a papist lady who he was fond of ; they had two children ; the night before he was



to come away, he told his wife the children were as much hers as his, he would leave her one, and take the other; she was equally fond of him, and said where he went she would go. The first place they settled was in Colchester. The pictures of those persons are now there in one of the female branches of the family, which your dear father and I saw; he would fain have had them, but could not obtain them; if you inquire at Colchester, you may get more information than I can give you. I have heard him say that when the plague was in England, eleven out of fourteen died of the family,—from those three spring all the rest, John De Berdt's father, and, I think, there was one Abraham, and your grandfather. Your grandfather was apprentice to a merchant, one Mr. De Berdt, a cousin, but he left out the De, and signed his name Berdt; some of the family signed their names Bert, which has made great confusion in the families, though they were all of the same family. Your grandfather always kept to the original name De Berdt: there was an old lady (I think she lived at Chelsea) who was not married; she signed her name De Berdt, if I remember right; she has not been dead many years; when she came to London she lodged at a dressmaker's near the pump in Bishopsgate



Street; if you were to call there they might inform you whose daughter she was. I think they were some way related to her, but am not sure. I have forgot their names. There were some of the family lived at St. Edmond's Bury, who your father said were cousins,—they signed their names Bert. Some years ago, I remember it was said that those people who left Ipres in the persecution of Duke Alva's time, if they would make out their titles, might have their estates. I often spoke to your father, but he, good man, gave no ear to it; he sought a better country, which is an heavenly one.

I forgot to tell you your grandfather's name was John; if you look into the Dutch Bible you will find his name there. Some of their names are engraven in the Dutch church,—if you were to inquire there, perhaps you might get some information in their church books. I think I heard you say you met with a gentleman one day who said his name was De Berd. I think you said he was a counsellor; do you know where he lived? I believe there are some of John De B.'s sisters still living at Colchester, but are very poor. It would be worth while to go there. You might easily find out where the pictures are by inquiring. I do not know the persons' names, but the name of De Berdt is well



known at Colchester, perhaps in their church books. I do not know whether they were dissenters, but believe they were. I have often heard your father say there's no other family of the name of De Berdt. I wish you success if it is good for you to have the estate ; if not, I do not.\*

\* The Dutch church of my refugee ancestors is the church of the Austin Friars, London, given by Edward VI. "to the poor who fled from the Netherlands, France, and other parts beyond seas." The Library is said to contain MS. letters of Calvin, Peter Martyr, and other foreign Reformers.—(Cunningham's London, I. 285.)



## CHAPTER XI.

1774.

*Arrival of the Tea Ships—American Disturbances—  
Mrs. Reed's Letters on Public Affairs—The Boston  
Port, and Quebec Bills—Letter from Hugh Baillie—  
Politics.*

BETWEEN the date of the last and of the next letter, public affairs had become very gloomy and perplexed. The foolish tea experiment of the British government had been made and failed. At Boston, the cargo was destroyed ; from Philadelphia, it was decorously but decisively excluded. Popular tumult was with difficulty repressed ; and discontent, and resolute determination, if need be, to resist, were manifested everywhere. In May 1774, a few days after the effigies of Wedderburne and Hutchinson had been burned in Philadelphia, and the rumor of the Boston Port Bill had reached America, Mrs. Reed, now rapidly becoming American in



spirit and truth, writes again, sadly but resolutely, as to her own and her country's prospect.

MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, 14th May, 1774.

Not having yet received any letter from my dear Dennis, I have the less particularly to write, but I could not suffer this vessel to sail without a line from me. We are very impatient for the arrival of another ship, to have the particulars of the fate of Boston. The news of the removal of their Custom House is just received here, and distresses every thinking person. The Provinces are determined to stand by them, and make it a common cause. What will be the consequence, no eye can foresee. I fear the intercourse between this and England will in a great measure be stopped; at least it will be interrupted for a time, and you, with the rest, will feel the bad effects of it in your trade affairs. I am distressed on your account, as well as for the public. However, perhaps, very different measures may be adopted. These are only the hasty sentiments that first arise in the minds of the people, but whatever the result, my dear Mr. Reed will inform you of the



particulars, and advise what will be the most for your interest. How often, my dear Dennis, do I wish you were well settled here. Then England would have less charms for me, less attraction in it, and I should enjoy as much happiness as I have reason to expect in this world ; but I cannot see any present prospect of this. The threatening appearance of political affairs darkens every scheme I turn in my mind, and I dare not dwell on the subject that yields so little hope.

You will by this time think that a very melancholy turn of mind has taken possession of me, since my whole letter thus far bears the marks of gloom and apprehension. I assure you, I do not find myself in a very cheerful humor, and principally on account of this last news from England ; but I will dwell no longer on this subject but leave it to wiser heads to determine, and with more confidence than ever in a kind and overruling Providence to bring good out of evil.

I don't know whether Mr. Reed has ever mentioned to you the prospect of your having very shortly the Agency of New Jersey. It was talked of the last session of the Assembly of that Province, and was not immediately pushed on account of the Governor ; and as Doctor Franklin's situation



has been so disagreeable a one, everybody is glad it rested as it did, but if he comes over or declines the office, I believe you will have it without any opposition. Agencies at present are not very desirable, but you could not have any on the Continent that would be attended with less difficulty; it being an inland Province, and not engaged in any particular dispute with the mother country.

The letter concludes as usual with some domestic commissions.

“Send me four boxes of tooth powder and tincture in proportion—also get made for me a tin form for blanchmange in shape of a bunch of grapes. I could make my commission much larger but that I apprehended a non-importation will take place, and in that case I would not have you think of sending a single article. If you should send them, send also some little matters for the children—a box of ivory letters, and a toy or two of small value. Remember I have both boy and girl, though I suppose you hardly know how to believe it. Send something that will suit each. My little girl has grown strong, and will soon call on me for instruction. It makes me look very grave and considerate.”

Among the English correspondence of the year 1774, I find one letter, which, though aside from the



strict course of a memoir like this, and relating wholly to public affairs, I am tempted to quote, as illustrative of the "opposition" opinions in Great Britain, and of the boldness and earnestness with which they were expressed. It is very curious. The measures to which it refers, besides the Boston Port Bill, were the Act reviving the Statute of Henry VIII. for changing the venue of State Trials, and the Act known as the Quebec Bill—a measure which, by its supposed aggression on the religious liberties of the Protestant Colonies, excited violent resentment.

HUGH BAILLIE TO MR. REED.

London, August 2d, 1774.

DEAR SIR :

I have wrote several letters to you to the care of Mr. De Berdt. Since that time, some things have happened here which will be an eternal blot upon the memory both of our Parliament and Bishops. I've seen, for some time past, that some men in power about the King intended arbitrary power; but corrupt as we are, I never thought they durst ever attempt to support it in America by introducing



Popery and Slavery into Canada, and enlarging that Province in order to surround our Protestant brethren by French Papists. How they got the King to forget his coronation oath, and to forget the act of settlement of the crown upon his family, by both of which the protection of liberty and the Protestant religion are provided for, is more than I can imagine. But their thirst for arbitrary power is so great that nothing can stand in its way. They have, by a stroke of arbitrary power, destroyed the Charter of the East India Company, and have employed its revenues to maintain their sycophants and slaves; and they now want to apply the riches of America the same way, on pretence of a mob destroying some tea. Without so much as hearing the people of Boston, they have shut up its Port, and by the same rule they may shut up the Port of London, the first mob that happens here. They imagined the rest of the Provinces would sit still and see the trade and Charters of New England destroyed, as they pretended they had no designs against the rest of the Provinces. But they are now greatly alarmed on finding the union among the Provinces, and that they look upon the encroachments on New England as an attack upon all their charters and privileges. *They have no safety but in Union* and by that they



must break the neck of the present Administration ; for the whole trade of Britain must suffer so much, as well as the public revenue, that Lord Bute's influence must fall, and the rest are only his deputies. He has managed matters so, that those who fixed the crown in the Royal Family, and who are the lovers of liberty, are anxiously alarmed as they were in King James' time ; and the King has now for his supporters those put about him by Lord Bute, who are all Tories of Jacobite families, except some who have no religion at all. So you must judge how this must end, when the people of Britain see that their trade and manufactures are ruined, and their liberties and religion in danger.

Great endeavours will be used to persuade you to sit still, and not to take vigorous measures, under pretence of being moderate and cool ; but rely on this, *that your only safety lies in Union*. Go all one way, and if you are resolved to stop trade with Great Britain, the next election of members of Parliament must be against the present Ministry ; as the ruin of the manufactures of this country is inevitable, if the trade with America be destroyed. But if you dally with them, and under pretence of our promising things, delay coming to vigorous measures, everybody here will think you're betraying your



liberties, and your country. You have your Constitution as well as we. Your Charters are your Constitutions. Stand by them and you are safe. But if you are not steady on this point, and they can divide you, you are undone. I think it would be very proper to have a meeting of some deputies from every Province, and concert your scheme, and let it be known as to what you are determined upon, and to send over some deputies here against the next session of Parliament, in order to let your resolutions be known in the most respectful and firmest manner. Let your Deputies be engaged before they leave your country, as to the part they are to act, in the most solemn manner. The corruption here is so universal that there are few people proof against it, and I observe it begins to operate with you, for some people of Boston, I hear, have thanked Hutchinson for his good management—who is universally believed to be a traitor to his country; and I myself was personally acquainted with your agent from Pennsylvania, who they say put an end to himself, and who by receiving a pension and post from the Government, betrayed your interests. So you must be careful to send over such men, who both on account of their character and independent fortune are above corruption.



It was very unaccountable to see a Protestant House of Commons pass the Quebec Bill, establishing Popery with as much ease as they would have done any other thing that was a matter of indifference; but it will not be believed in after history that there could have been twenty-six men found for twenty-six Protestant Bishops, who would have consented to prefer Popery and slavery, as our twenty-six bishops did, to the Protestant religion and liberty. But as you don't like bishops, and so won't divide your wealth amongst them, the archdeacons, prebends, deans, canons, rich persons, &c., &c., like Papists better than you. Only compare the conduct of these bishops with those put in the Tower by King James for opposing Popery. It is evident they can have no religion, and they are much worse than the members of a certain house who are bribed by ready money, whereas, these venerable gentlemen are only bribed by the hopes of a better bishopric; but, indeed, I'm told they all promise to do as they are bid before they are made bishops.

I am sorry to find that Lord Dartmouth acts as bad a part as the rest. He opposed the Stamp Act under Lord Rockingham, but now that Lord North is at the head of the Treasury, he recollects



that his grandfather, Colonel Legge, was intimate with Lord North's grandfather, who opposed the Protestant succession, and was one of the Jacobite Ministry at the end of Queen Anne's reign.

To conclude, I hope you will all move staunchly in the cause of liberty and your country, and were I a few years younger, I should choose to live and die among you.\* I think this country is going into slavery, and I would not choose to be buried among slaves, and I should choose your cause as the last I plead before my death without either fee or reward. My compliments to your family, and

I am,

Yours, &c.,

H. B.

There are other letters from Mr. Baillie of the same temper, and breathing the same sympathy with colonial wrong, which I should be glad to copy, and should do so, did I not see the danger of crowding out my domestic and familiar narrative. Mrs. Reed's correspondence, to which I gladly return, has in it quite politics enough. She is, I repeat, fast becoming an American patriot woman.

\* "Were I young, and of heroic texture," writes a very different man a few years later, "I would go to America."—*Walpole to Lady Ossory* (1781), vol. ii. p. 62.



MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, Nov. 2d, 1774.

I have two of my dear Dennis's letters by me unanswered, one of which is of a very early date, and ought to have been acknowledged long ago. But when I tell you I have another daughter, you will not wonder that I have this time been a little negligent in answering letters. I assure you my hands are pretty full of business. Three children seem to take up all my time and attention, but, amidst these surrounding family concerns, my dear brother keeps his place in my affectionate regards with undiminished warmth,—but what need of assurances. Our hearts must have suffered some dreadful change if we could suspect each other's tenderest affection. I am now in great hopes of seeing you here. The total stop of business would give you leisure at home, and if American affairs take the wished-for turn, I am sure a voyage and knowledge of the country would be the most advantageous step you could take; but on this subject what can I say or advise—important it is become indeed. The next news from England after Parliament meets, I imagine, will be decisive. May God



grant it may not be hostile. A determination to proceed and enforce must inevitably plunge New England into a scene of blood and all the horrors of civil war, and how far it would extend it is impossible to say.

When I realize these dreadful events I wish for a safe retreat in Old England; but when I think further that England would not long be at peace if a civil war should break out here, I hardly know in which country the safest retreat could be found; perhaps it would be here, but may God grant wisdom and moderation to our rulers, that such dreadful events may not take place. Many people here are very sanguine in their expectations that the Acts will be repealed immediately, and I believe many have sent orders on that ground, but I cannot believe any such happy change will speedily take place. The people of New England have not such expectations. They are prepared for the worst event, and they have such ideas of their injured liberty, and so much enthusiasm in the cause, that I do not think that any power on earth could take it from them but with their lives. The proceedings of the Congress will show you how united the whole continent is in the cause, and from them you may judge of the sense of the people,—but I can say



nothing new on politics. Sentiments of this kind will reach you from every quarter.

The Congress brought some private pleasure as well as public advantage. It gave us the opportunity of seeing some of our old correspondents, Mr. Cushing, Mr. Adams, etc., with whom we spent some cheerful hours, but especially our very worthy friend, Mr. Cary, who has just left us, after spending near a month with us, and giving us much pleasure with his company.\* He is a most cheerful, worthy old gentleman, and from his former friendship with our dear father, and regard for us and you, I never entertained any person more affectionately or with greater pleasure. We were all low-spirited when he went away. His son also was a week with us, and we were happy in their company. He gave us a kind invitation to his house, which we intend to accept about this time next year, if no accident prevents, and if things take a favorable turn, I think you must come and go with us.† I can't help looking forward to the

\* John Adams's Diary of 1774, it seems to me, gives an excellent idea of the state of society in this, the then Metropolis of the Colonies,—the best indeed I know.

† "This time next year," the reader need scarcely be reminded, found civil war throughout the land. Mr. Cary's home at Charles-



time I hope to see you, and that you will find your advantage in it. But on the subject of business what can I write that can be pleasing, since it is entirely stopped. However, for your comfort I must tell you that when trade returns (if it ever does) you will have an opportunity of extending your connexion here to advantage. The agency affairs must rest as at present, as no Assembly has met, and nothing can be done till then. You may depend on every endeavour to serve you in that respect when the opportunity offers. Your letter to one of the members of Jersey was delivered to a gentleman, a particular friend of Mr. Reed, and of great influence in the House. You will see the Assembly of this Province has again chosen Dr. Franklin their agent, and doubled his salary, and by his son's, the Governor's, conversation, a little time ago, the Doctor was coming into favour again. Is it so? Pray write us as particularly as you can about politics, as everybody is anxious for every piece of intelligence on that subject, and they look upon Mr. Reed's advice from you as pretty au-

town had been reduced to ashes by a British bombardment, and its ruins were overlooked by the American soldiery who encircled the army of the mother country, beleaguered within the limits of Boston.



thentic. . . . Pray let us know the first moment you determine to come to America, as I must give you a whole sheet of advice and caution, and let you know what you must expect when you come to this part of the world, and prevent your falling into many errors, which almost every Englishman does on his arrival here, and very much to their prejudice. . . But I must conclude this long letter, or I shall not have room to assure you how affectionately

I am ever,

Yours,

E. REED.

MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, February 13th, 1775.

There is nothing for me to communicate to you concerning business that can give you any pleasure. You feel by this time that it is at a stand, and you will be the first to see any prospect of its returning to its old channel, as it depends on measures taken on your side of the water. . . . Mr. Reed's engagements in business are so numerous and extensive that his head is almost overcharged. As his business requires so much head work, it must engage him more than if it depended on his hands. This



with his late attention to politics has engrossed him more than common, and obliges him sometimes to postpone, though I assure you, he does not neglect your concerns here.

Of politics, I suppose you will expect me to say something, though everything now must come from you, and we are anxious to know what is to be the fate of this once rising country. It now seems standing on the brink of ruin. But the public papers will tell you everything, and Mr. Reed will also write you on the subject, so that little will be left for me to say, only that the people are in general united. The Quakers are endeavouring to steer a middle course, and make perhaps a merit of it to Government at home. How far their conduct will answer, I don't know, but it is despised here. One great comfort I have is, that if these great affairs must be brought to a crisis and decided, it had better be in our time than our childrens. You must not forget to write us every piece of intelligence concerning American affairs that you can pick up, especially what is said in the House, and who is on our side, and who against. These are of great consequence, and we place considerable confidence in your intelligence.

Remember me to all my friends who inquire of



my welfare. I love to think of England and of old times; perhaps I may see it again. It is surely a noble country, but such wishes and hopes I must keep concealed: perhaps they had better not rise at all. However, whether I shall be gratified in them or not, I can't give up the thought that I shall see you here, and that, soon, but I leave these things to a wise and gracious Providence to dispose of for the best. For the present, my dear brother, adieu.

Believe me, ever most assuredly and affectionately,

Yours,

E. REED.\*

\* About this time (February 2d), Mr. Reed wrote to his brother-in-law: "I must reserve my politics for a future letter; but we have such suspicions of foul play at your Post Office, that few choose to express themselves fully. I should be glad of your sentiments on this subject. It is a most infamous procedure, and I hope they may open this letter in order to be told of it. I have no notion of that State necessity which violates all the engagements of common honesty and social confidence. If you know Mr. Quincy, make my compliments to him. I should be glad to hear from him. I don't think your letters especially by private ships run the same risk as ours."—*MS. Letter*. In George Grenville's Papers, vol. iii. pp. 311-342, are some curious illustrations of post-office insecurity.



MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, March 14th, 1775.

The next letter from your side of the water will be important on every account. The whole country is in anxious expectation of the result of the determination of Parliament, which must decide the fate of this country; our hopes are very much elated by the Merchants' Petition. If the popular and mercantile voice are in our favour, I think there is great reason for our hopes. The petition from Jamaica, I imagine, will add considerable weight. If the West India Merchants should join the others, it must preponderate the scales in our favour. God only knows what the event will be: this country wishes for nothing so much as dependency on the Mother State on proper terms, and to be secure of their liberties; and you may depend on it that the accounts given that this country is aiming at independence, are false, and arise only from the enemies of both countries. You may judge, my dear Dennis, how interesting politics are, when they employ so much of my thoughts and attention, now I am surrounded with family concerns; however, they are important to me, particularly as I have a share in both countries and



am interested in the welfare of both more than the common run of the people here :—but my politics must not take up any more of my time, as this vessel sails to-day, and I have not much left, only to beg of you to keep us well informed of public affairs, and as many of the particular manœuvres as you can. Do tell us what part the great Doctor Franklin is taking ; whether he has the openness to declare his sentiments before he sees which way affairs will terminate.



## CHAPTER XII.

1775.

*Battle of Lexington—Burning of Charlestown—Richard Cary—Mr. Reed at Camp—Secretary to Washington—Mrs. Reed's Letters on Public Affairs—Letter from John Cox—American Independence.*

I HAVE now brought my narrative to the verge of actual war, for in little more than a month from the date of the last letters, in which the writer, echoing no doubt the opinions and sentiments around her, spoke so earnestly and affectionately of the mother country and the ties that bound the Colonists to Great Britain, the blow at Lexington was struck and Independence became a fact. The excitement occasioned by the news of the conflict, in the Middle and Southern Colonies, was extreme, and it belongs to History to describe its progress and results. The intelligence came to Mr. Reed's family from their



friend Richard Cary of Charlestown, whose letter after describing the affair at Concord, and the retreat of Lord Percy's troops, thus depicts the excitement "down east."\*

RICHARD CARY TO MR. REED.

"Things are brought into such a melancholy state that all business is laid aside—people are leaving their habitations, and retiring into the country for safety, many not knowing where to go. The Province is alarmed. Large bodies of soldiers are collecting and enlisting into the Provincial army. General Gage and his troops are shut up in Boston. He, and the inhabitants are distressed for want of fresh provisions. There was an agreement between him and them, that on delivering up their arms they should be allowed to come out with their effects, in doing of which he promised to assist them all that lay in his power. How astonishing to tell you, many can't get papers to come out at all. None are allowed to bring out any provisions with them. They will permit nothing but furniture to come out. To see the poor people coming out

\* MS. Letters, May 3d, and 13th, 1775.



over the ferry without anything to eat, is affecting. Take it altogether it is a scene of confusion and distress, especially it was so, for the women and children, when the Regulars were drove into this town by the country people from Concord. My daughter Nancy is in the country, which I wish was with you. The rest of the family are with me. I shall continue in town until I apprehend danger. I am of some little service to my distressed friends that come out of Boston, who give me pleasure in coming freely to my house. My dear friend, what a trial are many of us exercised with, in being obliged to leave our habitations, quit our business, be separated from our families and friends, and know not when we shall enjoy them again. General Gage breaking the capitulation he made with the town of Boston, is base and dishonourable, for which he must be universally condemned. There's now such a spirit prevailing, no difficulties or dangers will discourage our brave countrymen, from supporting and defending the rights and liberties of their country. I could enlarge but my mind is so confused, I'm not fit to write. My best regards to all friends, particularly to your dear family. Let me hear frequently from you. The state of Boston and Charlestown, demands the pity of every humane



heart. May God sanctify our troubles, and take us under the protection of his Providence and grace." A few days later, Mr. Cary adds in a Postscript. "I have been made happy by receiving your very acceptable favour of the 28th of April, which is like a cordial. The sympathy, union, and support of the Southern Colonies is a matter of joy and thankfulness, and gives a noble courage and ardour under our distress. We are impatiently waiting till we hear from the Continental Congress—nothing will be done till their minds are known. Their advice will be followed. The difficulty of our friends getting out of Boston, daily increases. It is not doubted, the General intends to keep a great number of respectable inhabitants of property in. His conduct to encourage the negroes to leave their masters and come into his service, which many have done, is astonishing. It looks as if the horrors and distresses of a civil war will soon take place, on the arrival of his troops. To be cooped up in Boston without fresh provisions, &c., will be too dishonourable and humiliating for British troops, that have been a terror to Europe. Things appear too violent to last. It looks by the spirit and union that America will prevail and be free. As you justly observe, Lord Dartmouth's conduct is astonishing.



The love of money is the root of all evil. Dr. Franklin's advice is pleasing, and will be followed. A thousand thanks is returned for your sympathy, concern, and kind invitation. It is like, Nancy may see you, and personally express her gratitude. Adieu, my dear friend. Every blessing attend you and yours. I am,

"Your very affectionate friend.

"RICHARD CARY."

In June of this year, Washington was appointed Commander-in-Chief, and Mr. Reed, with a number of Philadelphians, set out to accompany him on his way to Boston, where the Continental army was organizing. The following earnest and sincere letter written during his absence, and probably before the news of the battle of Bunker Hill, for intelligence travelled very slowly, shows that his wife had no idea that his absence was more than temporary, or that he was about to become a soldier. It shows, however, also, how well prepared her generous spirit must have been for the news when it did come. She had the heart of a soldier's wife.



MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, June 24th, 1775.

I have two of my dear Dennis's letters by me unanswered; one of the 3d of May I received a few days ago, but for a particular answer I must refer you to another opportunity; this vessel sailing in haste does not give me time to be particular, only to tell you we are well. Mr. Reed has been very unwell all summer with an intermitting fever, but I hope is now perfectly recovered; he is at present attending General Washington part of his way to Boston, where he is gone to take the command of the American army. Alas! my dear Dennis, what melancholy scenes we have lived to be engaged in; civil war, with all its horrors, stains this land, and whatever our fellow-subjects may think, the people here are determined to die or be free. They are now raised to a pitch it was thought they never could arrive at; but so it is, and they shrink not at anything that yet appears before them. The part which my dear Mr. Reed has taken in the civil and military affairs of his country, makes his return to England at present totally improper; for much as I wish him free from danger, yet I could



not ask him to act so cowardly a part as to fly when his country so eminently needs his assistance, both in advice and action. You will see, my dear Dennis, by the papers, that he is appointed lieutenant-colonel of our battalion of militia. Indeed, everything in this City bears a warlike aspect. Two thousand men in the field, all in uniform, make a very military appearance. A regiment of men whom they call riflemen, dress themselves like Indians, and make a very formidable show. Everything which we feared seems come to pass; but, among all our public troubles, I sincerely rejoice at the good account my brother gives of his private affairs;—to have £1000 out at interest in so short a time, is more than I expected, and I hope he is not unmindful of that kind and bountiful hand which bestows the blessings. I am distressed what you will do in this state of affairs. Trade is entirely out of the question; nothing but the sound of arms and the destruction of war engages this country; however, I think you may come over to see us without any hazard,—your being an Englishman will excuse you from taking an active part in our dispute, and your being a friend to this country in principle, would not expose you to danger, but rather be pleasing to the people here. I do, indeed,



long as much to see you as you can imagine; it seems an age to me since I took leave of you. Oh! my dear Dennis, you must come if possible; my heart leaps for joy at the thoughts of seeing you: you must come and protect and take care of us if my dear Mr. Reed should be called to act in defence of his country; but this thought I can't bear neither, and I hope a kind Providence will interpose yet in our favour, and find out some way for our relief:—but I must bid you adieu. I believe that this letter is an incorrect ramble, as I have not time to read it over, or digest any thoughts, and only just to tell you that

I am, with the tenderest affection,

Yours,

E. REED.

Again, in July, Mr. Reed being then at Cambridge, she writes in the same tone.

MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, July 22d, 1775.

I wrote, my dear Dennis, about a fortnight ago, since which an event has taken place which I little thought of, and which I assure you my dear Mr.



Reed as little suspected when he went from home, that is, his appointment as Secretary to the General, in which station he stays at Cambridge till a fixed appointment is made, as he does not intend to take upon himself the constant business. However, I don't expect him home for two months at soonest. I know how much you will feel for me in this situation. I confess it is a trial I never thought I should have experienced, and therefore am the less prepared to bear it, but I am very happy that his character does not expose him to personal danger, and he is as secure as he can be amidst so much war. What do you think—what do the people in general think of our distresses and conduct? The whole continent is so engaged now that they never will give up. Georgia has joined the Congress,—every heart and every hand almost, is warm and active in the cause: certainly, my dear brother, it is a glorious one. You see every person willing to sacrifice his private interest in this glorious contest. Virtue, honour, unanimity, bravery,—all conspire to carry it on, and sure it has at least a chance to be victorious. I believe it *will*, at last, whatever difficulties and discouragements it may meet with at first. A variety of avocations have prevented my writing till the last moment of the ship sailing,



that I can only say we are well. I heard from Mr. Reed this afternoon, and he is also well. Adieu, my ever dear Dennis: do come and see us in the day of trouble, that I may give you once more some personal marks of my affection, for I am tired of having only this manner of assuring you how

I am, sincerely and affectionately, yours,

E. REED.

With what feelings others received this news of Mr. Reed's change of destiny, is apparent from a letter written at this time by an esteemed friend, a most gallant and patriotic gentleman, and which I quote here, not merely for its incidental illustration of my narrative, but because the writer is one whom the traditions of my family have taught me to regard with extreme respect. Mr. John Cox is the gentleman to whom I refer. His wife, whom in advanced age I can well remember, was my grandmother's steadiest, truest friend. They seemed to have loved as sisters.

COLONEL JOHN COX TO MR. REED, AT CAMBRIDGE.

Philadelphia, July 26th, 1775.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

As none of your friends here had the most dis-



tant idea of your intention to proceed with the General further than New York, you might with great propriety conclude they were not a little surprised when they were informed of your having gone through to Cambridge, but much more was their astonishment, on being told you had accepted the office of Secretary, as it was a sacrifice the public could have no right to expect from a person situated as you were. However, on the whole, though I must confess I, with many other of your best friends, on the first view of matters, could not but think you very wrong, I begin now to view your conduct in quite a different point of light, and have the pleasure to inform you, it has effectually rivetted you in the esteem of your fellow-citizens of all ranks, and you may rest assured, should there be any men embodied in this Province to act in conjunction with the New England troops, that the Lieutenant-Colonel of the Second Battalion will not be forgotten;\* but at present there seems but very,

\* The officers of the three battalions of Pennsylvania troops were:—First battalion, Colonel, John Dickinson; Lieutenant-Colonel, John Chevalier; Majors, Jacob Moyer and William Coats.

Second battalion, Colonel, Daniel Roberdeau; Lieutenant-Colonel, Joseph Reed; Majors, John Cox and John Bayard.

Third battalion, Colonel, John Cadwalader; Lieutenant-Colonel, John Nixon: Majors, Thomas Mifflin and Samuel Meredith.



little prospect of it, as I do not believe we shall be able to raise a single company on the contracted plan proposed by our Assembly, which orders forty-five hundred men immediately raised in the different parts of the province to be ready to march at a minute's warning, without any allowance or pay, except when in actual service, which are terms which our common people cannot think of complying with, nor do we think they ought. The officers and committees of the city and county, with the Committee of Safety, had a meeting a few days ago on that business, when the resolve touching minute men was fully debated, and though the mode proposed by the House, and recommended by the Congress, was by no means thought practicable, yet as no application could with propriety be made to either of those bodies for further provision, previous to sounding the Associators on the subject, it was agreed to make the experiment, and that we might be prepared, on refusal, having in view at the same time the putting our Association on a more respectable footing, and falling on some method to oblige the inhabitants throughout the Province, not conscientiously principled against taking up arms, to join the Association, and for several other good purposes, it was resolved that the Committee of the



City and Liberties of Philadelphia should be requested to call a Provincial Convention without delay; which question on being last night in full committee moved and warmly debated, was, through the opposition given to it by Messrs. Dickinson and Thomson, who appeared there on purpose to oppose it, carried in the negative, so that we shall now be obliged to wait the next session of the Assembly, before anything further can be done in the matter. The Committee of Safety are now busily engaged in preparing to stop our navigation by sinking what they call a chevaux-de-frise at Red Bank, and have likewise a number of large gondolas, to carry from fifty to sixty men, and an 18-pounder in the bow, to be immediately built. One or two of them are already finished. What execution they will be able to do I really know not, but it is said by those who pretend to understand the matter, that three or four of them are more than equal to a 20-gun ship. We have now a man-of-war at Newcastle, sent, I suppose, to put the late Act of Parliament into execution. How far she will be able to succeed is uncertain. I wish we may not have more of them before our navigation is stopped. I have the pleasure to inform you that your battalion, through the indefatigable industry of your brother colonel and



the majors, do credit to the Association, and I have the vanity to believe would cut no despicable figure even at Cambridge. We meet in battalion regularly three times a week, and very often in general divisions.

Immediately on the receipt of your letter informing us of your having accepted the Secretaryship, I warmly pressed Mrs. Reed to go with her family to Burlington, where we would endeavour to accommodate her, but she rather preferred going to Byberry, not far from Pennypack, where she was informed she could be well accommodated on moderate terms, but being disappointed in her expectations, and there being no house to get either at Burlington or elsewhere to her mind, I have at length persuaded her to divide herself and family between Mrs. Bowes Reed and Mrs. Cox, at Green Bank, assuring her that nothing shall be left undone to make her as happy as she can possibly be, in your absence, which without a compliment, she bears like herself. She, with the family, intend going up with me about the middle of next week. Any letters to Mrs. Reed, brought by Mr. Hodge\* to my house, will be immediately forwarded to Burlington, and I will take care to forward her's to you. Miss Patty is I

\* Andrew Hodge, then a student in Mr. Reed's office.



think much better, and the rest of the family are as you left them. One of the Pilot boats, despatched some time ago to the West Indies for powder, arrived a few days ago from the Mole(?), with upwards of 500 quarter casks, and there are two more daily expected, so that in all probability, we shall ere long be pretty well supplied with that article, which we have been in great pain about, for, without that, all our spirit and military preparations would answer no valuable purpose. Believe me, when I tell you that we never stood more in need of your assistance, than since your absence, particularly in Committee; indeed to be plain, without a compliment, no man was ever so missed, nor can we possibly do without you, so that your speedy return is not only anxiously wished by your family and friends in particular, but by every man in the City, who is either interested in, or wishes well the common cause. Through the recommendation of a friend of mine, I take the liberty to mention to your notice Mr. Thomas Craig, Quarter-Master to Colonel Thomson's Regiment of Riflemen, who, I expect, will be with you in a fortnight, at farthest, as the Colonel is to set out to-morrow to join the several companies on the road, somewhere between this and New York. If there should be any cannon



shot wanted at the camp, I should be glad you should think of Batsto,\* as I could supply the army with any quantity they might stand in need of. I am now casting some for our Artillery Company. . . May God bless and protect you, is the wish of your affectionate friend and well wisher.

JOHN COX.

Mr. Reed remained at Camp in the performance of arduous and responsible duty till October, 1775. His letters homeward have been already published, but all or nearly all of Mrs. Reed's replies are lost. I have therefore to return to her correspondence with her friends in England, which the disturbance of the times much interrupted, but which even in its mutilated form, seems to me most characteristic and interesting. Having remained some time "with her little flock," at Green Bank, at Burlington,† Mrs. Reed, in the month of September, 1775, paid a visit to her brother-in-law, Mr. Pettit, at Perth Amboy, whence the following letter was written. There is eloquence in its simple

\* Mr. Cox's furnace in New Jersey.

† The place on Green Bank occupied by Colonel Cox, and at which Mrs. Reed and her little ones were so often welcome guests, I have always understood, is that occupied by Mr. Charles Chauncey (1849).



earnestness. There is in it no hankering after home, and the Old Country, but from first to last, it is the expression of thorough American feeling.

MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Amboy, Sept. 8th, 1775.

You will see by the date of this, that I am from home; the health of my dear girl which always suffers in the summer months, was the chief reason of my coming here; I find it very beneficial to her, and pleasant for myself. I received your's of the 20th and 21st of June. The news they contained, though not very material, I sent to my dear Mr. Reed at the Camp. He is yet there amidst all the confusion and horrors of war. Before this time you know our dreadful situation here, and indeed that of every Southern Province. We only hear the sound, but it is such a one as sometimes shakes my firmness and resolution; but I find the human mind can be habituated to almost anything; even the most distressing scenes after a while become familiar. I am happy that Mr. Reed's situation at Camp, is the most eligible he could have been placed in,—his accommodations with the General,—in his confidence,—and his duty in the Councils rather than the field,



while his person is safe from danger, I cheerfully give up his profits in business (which were not trifling), and I acquiesce, without repining at his being so long absent from me. I think the cause in which he is engaged, so just, so glorious, and I hope will be so victorious, that private interest and pleasure may and ought to be given up, without a murmur. But where sleep all our friends in England? Where sleep the virtue and justice of the English nation? Will nothing rouse them, or are they so few in number, and small in consequence, that though awake, their voice cannot be heard for the multitude of our enemies.\* How strange would this situation of things have appeared, even in prospect, a few years ago. Could we have foreseen it, when we parted in England, it would probably have prevented that separation. We might often, if we could foresee events, provide against approaching evils; but I believe it is right we should not, for though our private happiness might have been promoted, yet our country would

\* On the 20th of February, 1775, Lord Chatham had written to Lord Camden, "Everything but justice and reason will, I am persuaded, prove vain to men like the Americans, with principles of right in their minds and hearts, and with arms in their hands to assert those principles."—*IV. Chatham Correspondence*, 403.



not have been benefitted, for at this time she requires all her friends, and has a right to expect services from such heads and hearts, as can most conduce to her safety. We impatiently wait to hear what effect the battle of Bunker's Hill has, both on our friends and enemies; a few weeks, I suppose, will let us know. They had last Saturday (or rather Sunday), week, a sort of skirmish; a part of the American army advanced 260 yards nearer the enemy's lines, on Saturday evening; the enemy either did not see them, or were not prepared, as they did not begin to fire till 10 o'clock next day; it continued very heavy all Sunday; there were two of our common soldiers killed, and two wounded, one, a Pennsylvania volunteer, which was all the mischief done from 300 cannon shot. This news you may depend upon, as I have it from head-quarters; the cannonading had begun again when my letter came away; if I hear anything further before I seal this, I will let you know; I am the more particular, because the newspapers are not always to be depended on as to particulars, though true in general. I wrote Mr. Reed all the private intelligence. I am very glad Thomson's affair is settled. The report, which I find is yet circulated in London, of the correspondence between Mr. Reed and Lord Dartmouth, had not been



whispered in Philadelphia when I left it; how it may be by this time, I don't know, but I am not very uneasy about it, as Mr. Reed losing his office is a pretty good proof the service, even supposing any, did not deserve a reward; and the active and decisive part he has taken in public affairs, must remove every doubt, even if there was any, in the minds of the people here. Indeed it would not be a trifle that could shake the confidence of his countrymen in him. I take it for granted, that I am writing to some curious person in office, and that my letter, insignificant as it is, will be opened before you get it.\* One from Mr. Lane, Secretary of the Jersey Society, to Mr. Reed, came here with the seal quite broke, as if it was done on purpose to show they dare and would do it. I hope it is no treason to say I wish well to the cause of America, though such treason is not now thought much of. However, I am safe in telling you how much my love is kept alive, though at this distance, and with what undiminished affection I am, ever truly,

Yours.

No persons sign names now. Mamma is at Bur-

\* See note to p. 97, vol. i. Life of Reed. The correspondence with Lord Dartmouth is there published.



lington : has been a little unwell, but is now as well as usual. I have wrote in a great hurry, as I just heard of the opportunity.

The next letter, written a day or two before her husband's return, has a most significant allusion—one of the earliest I know—to American Independence ; words which, as she says, “a twelvemonth before would have alarmed every person on the continent,”—and no one can read these letters of an intelligent, kind-hearted *Englishwoman*, whose love for her early home slowly and reluctantly faded away, without new and more contemptuous wonder at the dismal folly of the councils of the mother country, and, I am bound to say, the wilful infatuation of the people who thus threw away a loyal Colonial Empire.\*

\* “The fact was,” says a living British Statesman, speaking of these times, “the sovereign and the people were alike prejudiced, angry, and wilful.”—Lord John Russell's Note to C. J. Fox's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 135.



MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, October 28th, 1775.

It is with particular pleasure I now sit down to write to my dear Dennis, as I am free from the fear of any prying intruder; the thought that my late letters have been subjected to such curiosity has been a painful restraint upon me, and perhaps I have not been cautious enough in what I have written, but so it is, and if I have committed treason, it must remain: however, as this will be delivered to you by your correspondent, Miss Watson, I trust it will come secure. I dare say my dear Dennis is very anxious to hear from us. I think it very probable you will hear from Mr. Reed by this conveyance, as I hope he will be in New York on his way home, and perhaps he may catch the opportunity as he passes. His service has proved of so much consequence in the councils at the Camp, that he has devoted himself to the service of the public, and I doubt not it will give him as much pleasure in the recollection as any occurrence in his life;—indeed, my dear Dennis, the cause in which he is engaged is the cause of liberty and virtue, how much soever it may be branded by the names of



rebellion and treason. But I need not vindicate or explain the motives of our conduct to you. I think it must be plain to every person that thinks justly, and is unprejudiced:—but, my dear Dennis, what will be the event? We have a powerful enemy to contend with, if they unite heartily against us, which I fear is but too likely;—we long to hear from you, that some particulars may reach us which we may depend upon. I hope you will continue to write us as fully as you can on these important affairs. Everything that is dear to us is at stake. As to our private concerns, I have little to say. Mr. Reed being from home, you cannot hear anything relative to Thomson, or any other matter. I suppose he will have a volume to write to you. I am as anxious to hear from you as to your intentions and views. I know it depends on circumstances on this side the water, but the present moment is such a state of suspense as well as confusion, that it is hardly possible to give an opinion:—the wisest are puzzled. I wish for my dear Mr. Reed, that I might consult him, and that you might have his judgment: as to trade, it hangs so uncertain, that we may in a few months trade with all the world on our own risk, or it may return to its former channel. It seems now to depend on the



reception of our last Petition from the Congress to the King; if that should be so considered as to lay a foundation for negotiation, we may be again reconciled,—if not, I imagine WE SHALL DECLARE FOR INDEPENDENCE, and exert our utmost to defend ourselves.\* This proposition would have alarmed almost every person on the Continent a twelvemonth ago, but now the general voice is, if the Ministry and Nation *will* drive us to it, we must do it, rather than submit, after so many public resolutions to the contrary. In this case, of course, no trade can be carried on between the two countries, and if you should determine to come and see us, it must either be with a design to take up your abode with us, and share our fate, or only to pay us a visit:—this last would be a painful pleasure, if I may use the expression, as the thoughts of your leaving us after staying a little time, would mar the joy, and destroy the pleasure of our intercourse; but if the other event should take place, and the unhappy breach should have an appearance of healing, your prospects will, I think, again be clear. Mr. Reed has not forgot you in your favourite prospect of an

\* Mrs. Adams's letter to her husband, in favour of independence, is of later date,—12th November, 1775.—*Mrs. Adams's Letters*, vol. i. p. 79.



Agency; he has made interest with the Jersey Assembly, who meet next month, and if they appoint an Agent, I dare say you will be the person. Mr. Kinsey thinks himself much obliged to you for your attention in sending him the pamphlets, etc., which have been of considerable use to him, and he says he hopes one day to have an opportunity of returning the favour. In trade, if there is any carried on, you will come in for a good share. Miss Watson intends returning again to this country, if times afford any prospect of mercantile connexion between America and England; and I imagine many other valuable correspondents might be formed on a better foundation than ever, but I am afraid the event of the present dispute will not be favourable to trade. Mamma, I suppose, has already desired you to get lodgings for Miss Watson, and treat her with hospitality, which I dare say you will do.

I have wrote you twice from Amboy, which I hope you will receive. My dear little girl, for whose health I went, has again recovered her usual health, but she is of so delicate a constitution, that she often droops and alarms me. My son Joseph and daughter Hetty are both well. Mamma keeps her health and spirits amazingly. Mr. Reed has



recovered his by his journey to the Camp. Everybody tells me he is grown so fat I should hardly know him on his return, which I expect will be one day this week. He has been gone from home above four months; his business has suffered not a little, but in such times like these every person must sacrifice something. Remember me most affectionately to Mrs. Wood and her family, and to all friends that inquire after me. God grant us to see a happy end of these melancholy scenes, though I fear this is to be but the beginning of sorrows. Adieu, my dear Dennis,—think of us often; remember we are struggling for our liberties and everything that is dear to us in life.

I am ever, most affectionately,

Yours, .

E. REED.



## CHAPTER XIII.

1776.

*Letter from London in 1775—Mr. Reed's Reply—Independence—Troops raised—Governor Franklin—Mrs. Reed's Letters continued—Progress of Resistance.*

NOT very long after this letter was written, intelligence of a still more gloomy tenour was received from England; for Mr. De Berdt, writing on the fourth of October, very clearly describes the state of feeling there. With this, I close the narrative of the year 1775, simply noting, that Mr. Reed returned from Camp a few days after the date of Mrs. Reed's letter in October.

MR. DE BERDT TO MR. REED.

London, October 4th, 1775.

I received your letter, my dear friend, from the Camp, and was happy to find you in a post so



honourable and, I hope, so safe. Peace is certainly the wish of every good man, and it is his duty to promote it, but there are times and seasons when passive obedience and non-resistance would be criminal. It is now the fashion of the times to call every staunch friend to civil and religious liberty Quidnuncs and Methodists. I confess there are many of each amongst us, and I dare say you are not without them; but, my dear friend, there are such men as real patriots, and who fear and love God above all things, and for such essential qualities are and ought to be highly valued and esteemed, and their principles adopted and supported. In spite of the mean resources of the Government, and breach of public faith in opening and reading letters, I will venture to write you my mind fully and freely, as this may be the last conveyance to you for many, many months—public notice having been given that this will be the last regular packet to America. Parliament meets on the 26th inst., and may perhaps take into consideration the last Petition of the Congress; but, I believe, a bloody campaign is intended the ensuing spring, and no plausible arguments ought to divert you from your plan of opposition, and I will tell you on what I ground my belief. The Ministry have adopted a plan on



the success of which they stand or fall, and their reliances here are brave English soldiers, a powerful Navy, mercenary foreign troops, an approving nation, supporting its credit, keeping up its public funds, manufacturing towns fully employed, persuading the landed interests how much they will be eased of taxes by subduing America, and embracing every opportunity of conveying an idea to the world that you are *rebels* in thought, word, and deed,—that you are struggling for independence and to be free of all taxes,—in short, that you are wicked people, murdering the king's good subjects, scalping and abusing all those unhappy men that fall into your hands, etc., etc. As to the first dependence, on English soldiers, though all the world admit their bravery, still in this bad cause many doubt their fighting with zeal and usual intrepidity. Recruits are with difficulty raised, the men disliking the service. Every garrison is bare of men, and this day's paper says, out of forty officers draughted for Ireland, thirty-eight have resigned their commissions, though I fear this is too good news to be true. The power of the Navy is on all hands admitted. Foreign troops may be hired to subdue you, but if ever they effect it, they will most probably continue in the country, which is worthy of



consideration. As yet, none are taken into pay. It is not easy to know the sense of the Nation, but, excepting those connected with the government, I believe the majority clearly for America. I suppose ten or twelve towns have addressed the king to prosecute coercive measures towards America. Counter-petitions for different steps are begun by Bristol, etc., and at London this day, but the people in general are not sufficiently roused and alarmed at the state of the Nation. One-fourth may be said to be always on the side of Government; one-fourth sunk in sensuality and pleasure; one-fourth immersed in business; and the remainder inattentive and indolent to all public matters, provided a grievance does not actually happen in their families or circles of acquaintance: but I am certain a few months will prove American consequence to this country, though the effects are more remote from the cause than any one could have thought. The landed interest in the House of Commons are made to believe that subduing America will relieve them of many burdens.

The narrative of the next year (1776), the year when the bond of political union was at last sun-  
dered, cannot be better begun than by two letters, simultaneously written by Mr. and Mrs. Reed



to their brother in England. They speak for themselves, and tell their tale of genuine feeling with simple energy. Mr. Reed's letter was not in my possession at the time his biography was published:

MR. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, February 24th, 1776.

This opportunity by Mr. Hartman presenting itself, I once more sit down to write you with some degree of freedom, as from his particular care of the letter, I hope it will get safely to your hand.

You will doubtless wish to know not only how we do, but what our prospects are for the next summer,—and I assure you they are melancholy enough. From the speeches in Parliament, and other public proceedings which we get by some means or another, there is very little prospect of peace, and all hope of accommodation seems to be given up. The Commissioners, who are said to be coming, will meet a very cool reception, unless they bring other offers than those of pardon; but it is so generally considered as a scheme to divide us, that I believe the minds of the people of this country are very illy disposed to attend to or treat with them. The



idea of Independence, which till the last session of Parliament was, I believe, sincerely disclaimed by a great majority of the inhabitants, gains ground daily as a measure of necessity, not of choice. Publications are now freely made on this subject, which would have been universally reprobated a few months ago. The seizure of our ships, burning our towns, and cruelty to our prisoners, have made wonderful impressions on the minds of the people, and disposed them rather to submit to any hardship of war, or inconvenience of government, than be under that of the authors of such aggravated distresses and calamities. New York is in a manner abandoned by all its inhabitants who are able to move. This city has such advantages of defence, and has made such preparations, that we hope and expect we shall be able to preserve it from the ruin which has fallen on its neighbours. No expense or trouble is spared for the purpose, but I make no doubt, in case of an alarm, which may be hourly and constantly expected, there would be great confusion. As it is, most of the families of any ability have provided themselves with retreats into the country, whither they will go as soon as the season opens the navigation generally. I propose to put your sister in the country with the family, for two reasons:—



their safety,—and the saving of expense : for though business has not formally stopped here, as in the provinces, it is so dull, and every person of any consequence is so taken up with public matters, that there is little more time than opportunity to do anything. My own summer's destination is not yet fully determined. If I remain here, I shall be employed in public concerns, and living on my little capital. I therefore rather incline to accept some office or post, where my services may perhaps be as useful, and receive some compensation, which, considering the demands of a growing family, it is my duty to attend to. At all events, I lay my account with having the world to begin in a manner anew, in which I shall not be singular. But we have advanced too far in this dispute, to stop at considerations like these, and shall think it well lost if we preserve our country from tyranny and bondage. We hear of great preparations with you :—ours are proportionate. There will be a very large Continental army this summer, besides provincial troops, backed by a militia under good regulations, and led by the gentlemen of the country. The foundation of a navy is laid, and there is a very good harmony among the provinces ; so that we flatter ourselves, except plundering the coast and per-



haps destroying some exposed seaport town, we shall be able successfully to oppose the force proposed to be sent against us. The Congress, about eight weeks ago, ordered nine battalions to be raised in this province and New Jersey. They are now complete, and some of the companies before Quebec by this time. By this, you may judge of the spirit and zeal of the people in the cause. Though our expectations of ammunition have failed, from some places, yet, through the connivance of our good friends, the French, we have the materials for making 150 tons of gunpowder, besides small quantities daily arriving; the high price tempting adventurers to run all risques. In all these respects we shall be better prepared this campaign than the last. I take for granted, that as soon as the seizure of our property abroad becomes general, the debts and property of the English merchants in this country will be seized and appropriated to the payment and satisfaction of the sufferers. The confusion and ruin that must ensue thereon you will be able to judge of better than I can. I am very glad you have so little here, though perhaps that little may be the greatest part of your property after satisfying your own creditors. Goods are scarce and dear, but manufactures are increasing, and in case of an



open trade, the advantages will doubtless tempt many to run the risque.

By this opportunity, there are two letters from Mr. Kinsey to you, and a bundle of the laws and pamphlets of the last session of Assembly at Burlington. In an intercepted letter of Governor Franklin, some time ago, to Lord Dartmouth, there was an account of your being chosen Agent, and that your merit was procuring, by some unfair means, copies of his letters and transmitting them to this country; that he understood you had some share of his Lordship's confidence, which you abused, and he therefore cautioned him against you. As perhaps he may have wrote the same thing so as to reach Lord Dartmouth, it may be best for you to anticipate it, as it is false and groundless. I am assured the letters you sent, were only the copies of the extracts laid before the House of Commons, and from which Almon's Register was composed; and I am sure you have too much spirit and virtue to make any ill use of his Lordship's favour. These rascally governors stop at no falsehood or misrepresentation, but let fly their arrows in the dark, hoping to escape detection by the privacy and confidence of their correspondence. It would have been



happy for both countries if we had hung them all years ago.

Your sister, mother, and the children are all well. It is so seldom now they can convey their affectionate remembrance to you, that they do it with double pleasure. In which they are most sincerely joined by

Dear Dennis, yours affectionately.

MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, February 25th, 1776.

How long is it, my dear Dennis, since we heard from you? I am distressed in looking back to your last letter to find it five months since the date of it. Among the various distresses which the public calamities have brought upon us, surely, this is none of the least; our friendly intercourse is interrupted in such a degree as to make us constantly uneasy as to your health and happiness, and perhaps while we are pleasing ourselves that you are enjoying both, scenes very different may attend you. At the best of times, the distance is so great as to make it an anxious situation, but now it is rendered doubly distressing. The health of my family is pretty well established. Mr. Reed, who was unwell in the



summer, was perfectly recovered by his journey; my children well except the eldest, whose constitution is very delicate, and is often drooping. Our dear mother enjoys her health and spirits surprisingly, though she sometimes looks back to former times and her native land with a great desire to return:—the public calamities we feel and bear, contribute much to this. Ours is indeed a land of trouble, and when it will cease, God only knows. Perhaps the propositions of peace which are to be sent will be such as we can honourably accept,—if so, our tranquillity and happiness will be again restored. We understand pardons are to be distributed to the *Rebels*, and smile at the thought of a neighbouring Governor giving them to his father and other relations.\* I suppose they must be humbly asked. If these are the only terms that are offered, I fear they will not be accepted; for whether the people here are right or wrong, they think, instead of receiving pardon, they merit the applause of every friend to liberty and mankind: thus principled, it is hard they should be stigmatised with the names of rebels and leaders of factions, etc., and drove to the hard necessity of defending themselves at the hazard of their lives.

\* William Franklin, Dr. Franklin's natural son, was the very loyal Governor of New Jersey.



And even supposing their liberties not in the danger they imagined, yet surely they have had some reason to be alarmed; and to be watchful and attentive to so great an object is virtuous, and to defend it when they think it attacked is brave. But I dismiss a subject on which I am much inclined to write, as it engrosses every heart and every tongue. What can I say about seeing you here?—It must remain entirely with you: your business and other circumstances will determine you: our country has no inducements now. Mr. Hartman, who presents this to you, you are already acquainted with by name and correspondence. He has been in a very bad state of health for some time past, and takes this voyage to England with a view of recovering it. My acquaintance with him is very slight, but those who know him intimately speak of him in terms which do him honour, and I make no doubt you will be pleased with his acquaintance. Mr. R. will write by him, so that I have nothing further to tell my dear Dennis, but that I feel more than common pleasure, after so long a pause in our correspondence, in assuring you of my love, and subscribing once more

Your most affectionate.\*

\* To neither of these letters are there any signatures.



## CHAPTER XIV.

1776-1777.

*Campaign of 1776 and Invasion of New Jersey—Letter from Camp—British Atrocities—George III. and Lord North—Mrs. Reed's Letters to England and to Camp—Washington's Letter from Middle Brook.*

THE year 1776, so fruitful in the great events of our American history, contributes few incidents to a merely personal narrative. Until June, Mrs. Reed's family was united; her husband being at home, and nothing occurring within the circle of a tranquil household that has interest even for the readers of a memoir like this. When Mr. Reed was with the army at New York as Adjutant-General, he probably destroyed his domestic correspondence, and I can only gather slight references to home matters from his almost daily letters, which have been already published. They show with what



placid cheerfulness the youthful mother bore this long and anxious separation, and how well she played the hard part of a soldier's unrepining wife. Her residence, most of the time, was with her dear friend, Mrs. Cox, on the Green Bank at Burlington. She was, though in comparative seclusion, near enough to the scene of perplexity and confusion in Philadelphia, to be able to give her husband accurate information of what was doing and meditated. It was not the disturbance of ordinary politics, but a fierce contest as to popular rights, asserted resolutely, and hotly denied,—Revolutionary committees taking possession of political power by no gradual or gentle process, but forcibly and roughly,—regular authority, hallowed by some sort of prescription, struggling against the noisy pressure from without,—soldiers enlisting, fortifications building, rumours of distant war, and the sound of hostile cannon close at their doors. Such was the scene in Philadelphia and its neighbourhood throughout the year 1776, and it would be very interesting to have it more fully illustrated. There are a few diaries of those times in existence which describe it very clearly.

At last the storm of war began to thicken round this part of the Colonies. Early in November, the



British Generals, having driven the Americans into the upper part of New York island, showed a disposition to move in a southwardly direction, and leaving Washington above them to cross the North River, and traversing New Jersey by forced marches to reach Philadelphia. Mrs. Reed was then residing at Burlington, in the house formerly occupied by Governor Franklin. To her, while there, the letters were written by her husband at Camp, which have been elsewhere published. I cannot refrain from inserting one, as painfully illustrative of these scenes of trial.

It tells the tale of coming danger most distinctly.

TO MRS. REED.

Camp, near White Plains, November 6th, 1776.

MY DEAREST LOVE,

After I wrote my last, your favour of the 29th October unexpectedly came to hand. It was so long since I had heard from you that the pleasure I had in it was greater than usual. I can easily conceive, my dear creature, that your tenderness will suffer much from a view of the dangers and difficulties which await me, and which your love will probably aggravate beyond their real pitch. Be



assured that you and the dear pledges of our love form a powerful restraint when I should otherwise be led to expose myself, and that I shall keep up the remembrance as a check. I do not blame you for a want of complete resignation. It is a lesson more easily given than practised, nor do I wonder that a view of your situation, in case of any accident to me, should give you cause for alarm. It forms a great part of my distress and anxiety; for when I look round me, I see none but single or childless persons, and most of them of such fortune that their loss could only be lamented as dissolving the ties of blood and friendship, but all the real wants of life would be supplied. *We* had passed the vale of adversity, and seemed just rising the opposite hill, when this torrent of calamity has swept us back; but at this, I do not repine, if Providence spares us for each other.

A new cause of alarm has risen since I wrote you last. The enemy, as we suppose, finding our army too advantageously posted to venture on an attack, the night before last began to move with all their baggage. Their course was towards the North River, which they still continue. Opinions here are various. Some think they are falling down upon Mount Washington, and after carrying that



post to go into winter quarters. Others that they mean to take shipping on the North River, proceed up and fall upon our rear. Others, and a great majority, think that finding this army too strongly posted, they have changed their whole plan, and are bending southward, intending to penetrate the Jerseys, and so move on to Philadelphia. A few hours must determine it. If the latter is the case, I presume a part of this army will pass over into the Jerseys. My heart melts within me at the thoughts of that fine country desolated, for it is of little consequence which army passes. It is equally destructive to friend and foe. And when I consider your exposed situation in such case, I feel all the anxieties which love and friendship can excite. My own opinion is, that the season is too far advanced for any movement of consequence, but that it is probable some excursions may be made to distress and alarm the inhabitants of Jersey, and revive the drooping spirits of their friends, which begin to sink at the prospect of the campaign closing without the entire conquest of the "rebels," as they term us. However, I may be mistaken, and probably am so, as I am almost singular in my opinion.

The accident which happened in consequence of the express stopping to leave your letter, obliges



me to enclose this to Mr. Rush, who, I hope, will send it to you as soon as possible. I should be glad to know how the matter really happened; for though neither you nor I are to blame, it tends to draw some reflections. Adieu, my dear creature; let us keep up our spirits, hope for better and happier days, and live so as to deserve them.

Yours, most affectionately.

Then began the darkest period of this seven years' war. Step by step,—the retreat beginning the day when Washington crossed the Hudson,—did the wasting army of the Americans retire before the confident advance of the enemy. Passing successively the Hackensack, the Passaic, and the Raritan, the invading troops, a mixed band of English and Hessians,—the latter the objects of natural terror,—continued their onward course till every post on the left bank of the Delaware was in their possession. Count Donop, with a detachment of Hessian cavalry, had his head-quarters at Mount Holly; his patrols entering Burlington the day after Mrs. Reed and her family, all women and children, had fled for refuge to Evesham, then near the edge of the pine forests. There they remained till after the affair at Trenton, cut off from all communica-



tion with home, and literally in the possession of the enemy. The tradition of my family is, that at one time preparations were actually made, and the travelling equipage,—a plain wagon and horses,—prepared, in which the helpless fugitives were to be transported by some of the lower ferries across the Delaware, and thence onward to the Western settlements of Pennsylvania or Virginia.

A better description of these scenes of terror will presently be given; but, before I come to it, I cannot refrain from repeating here,—no truth-loving American writer should ever fail to do it,—the strongest words of condemnation on one and all, from the monarch on the throne, whose heart never knew a softening emotion to America, through the peers, and prelates, and ministerial commoners, who did his bloody bidding, for this campaign of horror. The more it is studied the worse it seems, and the memory of it, fresh to the student's mind, is enough to chill all thoughts of kindness to the England of that day. That a monarchy of Christian pretensions, with its hierarchy professing peace and good-will to men,—for a majority of the Bishops voted for all the coercive measures of the Ministry, even for the employment of Hessians and Indians,—that any civilized government, at a day so recent as



the middle of the eighteenth century, should thus conduct a war against its own kindred, Englishmen and women, is almost incredible. And yet it was so; and I never think of George III., wandering blind and insane, a wretched, burthensome old man,—or his Minister (a far gentler, and wiser one), who carried on this war, also stricken with blindness,—without an irrepressible conviction of the awful penal justice even of this life, and that the blood and sorrow, the terror of the helpless, the agony of women fleeing from brutality, and of little children left fatherless and motherless, had its full and terrible expiation.\* I write these words not

\* In Bell's *Life of Canning*, I find the following passage, "During the King's illness there were two topics for ever present to his distempered imagination—America and the Church. 'How can I,' he used to exclaim, 'I that am born a gentleman, ever lay my head on my pillow in peace and quiet as long as I remember my American Colonies?' At another time he would mutter, 'I will remain true to the Church.' Then back again to America, and anon he would return to the Church; and so swing backwards and forwards between these two points of remorse, until they became an absolute part of his moral existence."—p. 179. Lord North's blind old age was serene and cheerful. There are in the *Memorials of Mr. Fox*, recently published and edited by Lord John Russell, two striking and painful illustrations of the King's violence of feeling towards his political opponents and the



to stimulate vulgar national antipathy, but as words of truth and history, which I should be false to my family records were I to suppress. That they are not too strong, may be seen in what was freshly written by one who was a fugitive from these barbarities,—one who, till oppression alienated her affections from her early home, was as loyal an Englishwoman as ever breathed. The two following letters have never been in print. They bear date, it will be seen, when prospects had become

Americans. In a private letter to Lord North, in August, 1775, he says, "As to any gratitude to be expected from Lord Chatham or his family, the whole tenour of their lives has shown them void of that most honourable sentiment. But when *decrepitude or death puts an end to him* as a trumpet of sedition, I shall make no difficulty in placing the second son's name instead of the father's, and making his pension £3,000." In August, 1782, Mr. Fox, then Secretary of State, wrote to inquire the King's pleasure as to receiving an accredited minister from the United States. The stubborn repugnance of George III., on this topic, is almost grotesquely shown in his reply. "As to the question whether I wish to receive a minister from America, I certainly can never express its being agreeable to me; and, indeed, I should think it wisest for both parties to have only agents, who can settle any matter of commerce; but, so far I cannot help adding, that I shall ever have a bad opinion of any Englishman who would accept of being an accredited minister from that revolted state, and which, certainly for years, cannot establish a stable government."



brighter, and after the British troops, Hessians and all, had been, as it were by a miracle, driven back to the Hudson.

MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

(Endorsed) March, 1777.

An opportunity of writing to you, my dear Dennis, is now become so rare, that I could not think of letting this slip without sitting down to tell you our distresses. How shall I describe our situation! For some months past, your heart, I am sure, has already felt much for us. But you cannot form any adequate idea of the scenes we have passed. Thank God, our apprehensions and fears have not been altogether realized, but these were sufficient. But one day's escape from an army of foreigners, and for several weeks within a few hours march of them, and since they have been driven back we have understood they had planned a visit to our retreat. Nothing could be more distressing but the dreadful reality. But a kind and overruling Providence prevented us from these dangers we feared, and our retreat has been safe and comfortable. Anything more we hardly dared to wish. Since the happy change in our affairs, we look back



without regret on our past distresses, and trust to the same Almighty Power, which so evidently appeared then in our favour, to deliver us from the hand of oppression, which lately threatened to strike us to the dust. You will be surprised, I dare say, at the rapid and uninterrupted progress the enemy made through this Province; but when I tell you the horrid blunder our rulers made, it will easily account for it. They enlisted their soldiers for a short time,—some four, some six months. The enemy, as might readily be supposed, were informed of this, and at the time our army was disbanding, and did not consist of three thousand men, they marched through and took possession of the Province. What has happened since, and the happy change, in which our arms have proved successful, you will hear from many quarters. Our prospects are brighter, our hopes are raised, our utmost efforts are existing, and we devoutly trust in the favour and assistance of the great Arbiter and Ruler of nations, who alone can give success to our arms and peace to our land.

Our domestic affairs have another change, by the addition of a daughter, which happened just at the time my dear Mr. Reed was exposed to all the dangers and fatigues of a campaign. A kind Provi-



dence has preserved both our lives, and we are now enjoying a few weeks together in peace and safety; but it is not without many anxious fears for the future. I cannot forget to tell you that my dear Mr. Reed has had some very narrow escapes of his life—once by one of our own men, who was running away, and whom he ordered to return to his duty. The fellow presented his musket within half a yard of his head, but it happily missed fire. And another time, in an engagement near New York, his horse was shot under him.

But, however great and complicated our difficulties and addresses have been, we have not been so fully taken up by them, but have truly and affectionately shared in your happier prospects, and are anxious to hear that your hopes and expectations, both in love and business, are answered. Adieu, adieu, my dear Dennis; I know not when I shall have another opportunity of writing to you. You must embrace every one of writing to us. I need not tell you our dear mamma remembers you with the utmost tenderness, or that I am,

With the sincerest affection,

Ever yours,

E. REED.



The following letter, which at the publication of my grandfather's Biography was not in my possession, is, perhaps, as earnest and impressive as any one Mr. Reed ever wrote. It is stern in its tone, and breathes a spirit of strong and just resentment. It was written in entire confidence, but at the same time, no doubt, with a view to the possibility of its falling into the enemy's hands.

MR. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, February 23d, 1777.

It is not one of the least misfortunes of these unhappy times in which our lot is cast, that the intercourse of the nearest relations and dearest friends is almost wholly interrupted. Except your last letter by Lord Howe, and your packet by Israel Morris, we have heard nothing from you for almost twelve months. However, it is no small consolation for us to learn that your prospects of business are exceeding good, whilst ours are changed from the most prosperous to the most adverse. The war being brought to our own doors, and carried on with the most inhuman ravage, in which age and sex have indiscriminately suffered, has banished every thought of law, so that the profession, for which it has been



my earliest study to qualify myself, is become entirely useless. The family, as well for safety as economy, have been obliged to leave Philadelphia; but, unluckily directing its course into the Jersey, which soon after the British and Hessian troops penetrated, your mother, and sister, and children\* were again obliged to fly, and are now secluded from all society but among themselves, surrounded with woods and inhabitants of the common class of country people. I thank God they have as yet experienced but little distress, but what arises from fatigue and apprehension. A party of the Hessian troops came into the town of Burlington the next day after they left, and afterwards were within three miles of their retreat. I have been plundered of everything they could carry away, and the destruction of what they could not, would have been the least in such a case to be expected; but, happily, the American arms at this crisis proved successful. The enemy was obliged to evacuate this country, and peace and quiet have been restored; but how long it will last none can tell but He who knows all things.

\* Mr. Reed, in his urgent letter to Washington of 22d December, 1776, spoke "of his wife and four children in the enemy's hands."—Life of Reed, vol. i. p. 273.



Your letter by Lord Howe arrived before there had been any effusion of blood. It was wrote with a spirit and sentiment that would do you honour among the sensible and dispassionate. I was then with the army, and, after showing it to the General, I transmitted it to the Congress, but no notice was taken of it. I then waited impatiently for a public disclosure of some terms or propositions from Lord Howe and his brother. If they had been such as would give my country any security against the unlimited powers of your Parliament to deprive us of our property at any time, and in what proportion they pleased, I should have applied myself most earnestly to have brought about an accommodation; and if those in power had wantonly or wickedly rejected the proposition, I should have retired from the army to a private and obscure station. But no such proposition being ever made, the general professions of kindness and justice were profusely given, and being well satisfied in my mind from a conversation I had with the Adjutant-General of the British army, whom I conducted to and from an interview with General Washington, that the commissioners had no power to give liberty, peace, and safety to this country, I no longer hesitated about my duty, and continued with the army



the whole campaign, and have been in every action except two which has happened during the whole summer. I thank God I have enjoyed uninterrupted health, and met with no accident. But the office I held not being agreeable to me, and my duty—what I deemed my duty—having made me many enemies among the intractable and undisciplined part of our army, I resolved to decline it when the campaign was over. In what line I shall hereafter move is very uncertain, but the dispute is now advanced to such a height, and the inhumanity with which it has been conducted by the British generals has created such an inveteracy between the two countries, as no reconciliation can ever efface. The British Nation must receive its impression from its officers and friends. They have injured us so highly by their ravages, cruelty, and insult that it is impossible they ever can forgive us, and there is no hatred so deadly as that of him who has injured another, and is conscious he can neither palliate nor redress it. The scenes of cruelty and desolation which my own eyes have beheld are beyond description. The havoc which avarice, and lust, and wantonness have made in this fine growing country will be remembered for ages, if its progress should cease to-morrow. The illiberal abuse of the



King and his Ministers I detest. A false ambition and a mistaken idea of the true interest of the nation have led them astray, but history shows us that this is no novelty. I fear national pride must also be taken into the account—that pride which, being transplanted to this country, shows our descent, and perhaps is not unjustly termed obstinacy. In this state of things, where can a man of honour and lover of his country set his foot—on the one hand unlimited submission, which scarcely leaves a shadow of liberty; on the other, a dreadful opposition, subversion of every species of social and commercial happiness, and of which no end is yet to be seen. Those who prefer temporary ease and safety to essential liberty would find no difficulty in the choice; but how can a man of honour, and who thinks himself bound to transmit to his posterity the blessings of liberty unimpaired, make the ignominious sacrifice?

Your mamma, sister, and the children are well. The former present their affectionate congratulations on your prospects, and join me in wishing you every happiness and success, both in love and business. The latter can only prattle about their uncle as a person of great consequence to us all, and especially their grandmamma. These times have made great inroads upon our family happiness, but



we endeavour to bear them with as much cheerfulness as we can. If it is possible for you to write to us through Mr. Ingersoll, who is in France, or if you direct your letters to a Mr. Ramsey, at Nantz, they will find a conveyance to me, if not intercepted on the road. Your own prudence will direct you not to write what may bring you into any difficulty.

Adieu, my dear Dennis,

Most affectionately yours.

The seclusion of Mr. Reed's family "among woods, and with no companions but common country people" was, I believe, at Norriton (now Norristown), on or near the east bank of the Schuylkill River, about seventeen miles above Philadelphia. Thence, in June, 1777, Mrs. Reed writes the following cheerful letter to be forwarded to Camp, the American head-quarters being at Middlebrook, and the hostile armies watching and impatiently skirmishing with each other in the northeastern part of New Jersey. This letter, so perfectly characteristic of its writer, I cannot refrain from here reproducing.



## MRS. REED TO MR. REED.

Norriton, June 21st, 1777.

I have received both my dear friend's letters, one by Mr. Henry, the other by some other conveyance. They have contributed in a great degree to raise my spirits, which, though low enough yet, are much better than when you parted with me; the reflection, how much I pain you by my want of resolution, and the double distress I occasion you, when I ought to make your duty light as possible, would tend to distress my spirits, did I not consider, that the best and only amends is to endeavour to resume my former cheerfulness, and regain my usual spirits. I wish you to know, my dearest friend, that I have done this, as much as possible, and would beg you would free your mind from every care on this head. I must acknowledge the good news I gather from your letters, and other accounts, have contributed much to it, and especially the pause there seems to be in the approaching events, have given me time to recover myself—however, I wish you to know that I am well in health, and better in spirits than when you left me.

Colonel Bayard dined with me yesterday, and the



ladies of the family. He hinted that you had some thoughts of coming up with him; but at the same time dropped something, which made me think you had determined otherwise, from the pain you had at leaving home—though I made no reply, I felt the reflection, which you know must arise if I thought it was wrong. I would assure my dearest friend, of my utmost endeavour to conquer a weakness which I know gives him pain, and endeavour to support my spirits, and acquire if possible, a new stock of resolution. I cannot bear the thought that anything on my part should ever, in the most distant manner, prevent you paying us a visit;—but I will not say any more on this head, I know you want no inducement to return, or any assurances of the pleasure it would give me.

We go on pretty well in our country life, our hay was got in in very good time and order. Your son worked so violently at it the first day, that he quite knocked himself up—he was so thoroughly tired, that he slept the next day (only just getting up to eat a crust of bread) till 12 o'clock, and I was not able to prevail on him to go into the field again. There is a good cow to be sold in our neighbourhood, with a calf above a fortnight old; the man asks £15 for her, but from his manner, I imagine he will take



something less. I will keep the matter in suspense until I hear from you; he has agreed to wait till the middle of next week for my answer. I have also some thoughts of sowing a little flax; our neighbours are going to sow some, and they tell me it often answers better than that sown in the spring. I think our landlord would let us have an acre, or half a one, of his plough land to sow it in; but as I am not famous for making good bargains in things out of my sphere, I shall put it off as long as possible, in hopes that you may be at home before it is too late—at least write me if you think I can have the seed.

I thank you, my dear friend, for your attention in sending the newspapers, as also those things by Mr. Campbell's wagon, which came very safe. The old horse came up a few days ago, and seems to have little other complaint than poorness and hunger. I put the milk to the cask of wine as you directed.

I am much pleased with your determination as to your line of conduct; the first, of being Adjutant-General to the militia, did not appear to me so clever. I wish I could find words sufficient to express how much I approve and admire your conduct, in which the tenderest regard for my happiness mingles with



your disinterested exertions in your country's service, but I dare not say all I think,—I know you smile already at what you call my partiality,—but I know my dear friend will not wholly despise my praises.

From what I gathered from Colonel Bayard, I imagine you will not go as far as head-quarters; and also from his and your account of public affairs, General Armstrong will not be wanted immediately, if so, I shall hope to see you in a few days. This, with the uncertainty where to direct to you, has prevented me from sending the —— you mention; I can send them any time when you want them, if you should not come home.

Let Jack buy for me thirty pounds of starch. Mrs. Murdoch will tell him the name and place where she bought the last, it was of a Frenchman; and also three or four small sized milk-pans. They can be lodged at Mr. Cox's, till an opportunity offers of sending them up here.

We are all well, and join in the most earnest wishes for your return.—Adieu.

I am, with the tenderest affection,

Ever yours,

E. REED.

This was about the time when Mr. Reed's plans, he having resigned his post as Adjutant-General



early in the spring, were undetermined, and it was equally uncertain in what quarter the coming campaign would be prosecuted. The British army were withdrawing their outposts from New Jersey, having no doubt in view southern military operations not yet developed or suspected, and the Americans were highly exhilarated at the appearance of driving the enemy out of the Jerseys, across the Hudson. It was at this juncture that General Washington wrote the following letter, urging anew on Mr. Reed the command of the cavalry, and expressing more strongly than ever his affectionate esteem. It has never been published before.

## WASHINGTON TO REED.

Middlebrook, Jan. 23d, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

Your favours of the 12th and 18th inst. are both before me, and on two accounts have given me pain ; first, because I much wished to see you at the head of the Cavalry ; and, secondly, by refusing of it my arrangements have been a good deal disconcerted. As your notions for refusing the appointment are no doubt satisfactory to yourself, and your determination fixed, it is unnecessary to enter upon a dis-



cussion of the point. I can only add, I wish it had been otherwise, especially as I flatter myself, that my last would convince you, that you still held the same place in my affection that you ever did. If inclination, or a desire of rendering those aids to the service which your abilities enable you to do, should lead you to the Camp, it is unnecessary for me, I hope, to add that I should be extremely happy in seeing you one of my family, whilst you remain in it.

The late coalition of parties in Pennsylvania is a most fortunate circumstance ; that, and the spirited manner in which the militia of this state turned out, upon the late manœuvre of the enemy, has in my opinion given a greater shock to the enemy than any event which has happened in the course of this dispute, because it was altogether unexpected, and gave the decisive stroke to their enterprise on Philadelphia. The hint you have given respecting the compliment due to the executive powers of Pennsylvania I thank you for, but can assure you I gave General Mifflin no direction respecting the militia, that I did not conceive, nay, that I had not been told by Congress, he was vested with before ; for you must know that General Mifflin, at the particular instance, and by a resolve of Congress, had been



detained from his duty in this Camp near a month, to be in readiness to have out the militia, if occasion should require it, and only got here the day before I received such intelligence, as convinced me that the enemy were upon the point of moving; in consequence of which I requested him to return, and without defining his duty, desired he would use his utmost endeavours to carry the designed opposition into effect; conceiving that a previous plan had been laid by Congress, or the State of Pennsylvania, so far as respected the mode of drawing the militia out. The action of them afterward, circumstances alone could direct. I did not pretend to give any order about it.

It gives me pleasure to learn from your letter that the reasons assigned by me to General Arnold, for not attacking the enemy in their situation between the Raritan and Millstone, met with the approbation of those who were acquainted with them. We have some amongst us, and I dare say Generals, who wish to make themselves popular at the expense of others, or who think the cause is not to be advanced otherwise than by fighting—the peculiar circumstances under which it is to be done, and the consequences which may follow, are objects too trivial for their attention,—but as I have one great



end in view, I shall, maugre all the (illegible) of this kind, steadily pursue the means which in my judgment leads to the accomplishment of it, not doubting but that the candid part of mankind, if they are convinced of my integrity, will make proper allowance for my inexperience and frailties. I will agree to be loaded with all the obloquy they can bestow, if I commit a wilful error.

If General Howe has not manœuvred much deeper than most people seem disposed to think him capable of, his army is absolutely gone off panic struck, but as I cannot persuade myself into a belief of the latter, notwithstanding it is the prevailing opinion of my officers. I cannot say that the move I am about to make towards Amboy accords altogether with my opinion, not that I am under any other apprehension than that of being obliged to lose ground again, which would indeed be no small misfortune, as the spirits of our troops and the country is greatly revived, (and I presume,) the enemy's not a little depressed, by their late retrograde motions.

By some late accounts I fancy the British grenadiers got a pretty severe peppering yesterday by Morgan's Rifle Corps; they fought, it seems, a considerable time within the distance of from twenty to forty yards, and from the concurring accounts of



several of the officers, more than a hundred of them must have fallen. Had there not been some mistake in point of time for marching the several brigades that were ordered upon that service, and particularly in delivering an order to General Varnum, I believe the rear of General Howe's troops might have been a little rougher handled than they were, for if an express who went to General Maxwell the evening before had reached him in time to co-operate upon the enemy's flank, for which purpose he was sent down the day before with a respectable force, very good consequences might have resulted from it; however, it is too late to remedy these mistakes, and my paper tells me I can add no more than to assure you that

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate,

G<sup>o</sup>. WASHINGTON.



## CHAPTER XV.

1777-1778-1779.

*Campaign of 1777-8—Conduct of the Enemy—A Loyalist's Diary—Mrs. Reed at Norriton and Flemington—Her Letters—Mr. Reed's Letter to Mr. De Berdt—The British Commissioners—Evacuation of Philadelphia—State of Politics—Mr. Reed elected President of Pennsylvania—Letter to Mr. De Berdt—Arnold—Fort Wilson Riot.*

IN the latter part of July, 1777, the British army was embarked at New York, on an unknown and unsuspected destination, and on the 25th of August landed at the head of Elk, Washington, in the mean time, moving his troops Southward, utterly uncertain where the enemy would present itself.\* During all this interval of suspense, Mrs.

\* In Horace Walpole's Letters to Lady Ossory, published in 1848, there is a series of charming letters from Mr.—afterwards



Reed and her family remained quietly at Norriton. On the 11th of September, 1777, the battle of Brandywine was fought, and Washington defeated. Then followed the operations in Chester County, the massacre at the Paoli by General Grey's grenadiers, and finally the retreat of the Americans across the Schuylkill, and the fall of Philadelphia. It was not until the last moment that Mrs. Reed and her little ones, the enemy being almost in sight, were removed and hurried away in a wagon driven by a negro man across the country again to Burlington. After remaining there some time they went—Mr. Reed continuing at the headquarters of the American army near Philadelphia, and being in almost every affair of consequence during the campaign,—for a short time back to Norriton, and afterwards, as a place of more secure retreat across the Delaware, to Flemington. From the former place the next letters were written,—the enemy being in Philadelphia, and making their predatory excursions in the neighbourhood.

It has been matter of controversy, even among

General,—Fitzpatrick, who served throughout this campaign in Pennsylvania and Maryland. It is curious to observe the uncontrolled disgust which all the British officers of rank express with regard to the war in America.



English writers,\* as to what extent of lawlessness existed and was countenanced by the British commanding officers at this period of the war. My own impression, founded on a calm investigation of the matter, is, that the effort to check the troops, especially the foreign mercenaries, was very unsuccessful. The word "rebels" had great significance, and all who bore that name were treated as beyond the pale of protection, so that, with all due allowance for the necessities of a beleaguered invading force, no great credit can be claimed for forbearance. I have now before me a very interesting diary of a respectable loyalist during the period when the British were here, and the contrast between the first and the last entries is very striking. It thus begins :

"September 26th, 1777. About 11 o'clock, A.M., Lord Cornwallis, with his division of the British and auxiliary troops, amounting to about three thousand men, marched into this city, accompanied by Enoch Story, Joseph Galloway, Andrew Allen, William Allen and others, inhabitants of this city, to the great relief of the inhabitants who have too long suffered the yoke of arbitrary power, and who testi-

\* United Service Journal, November, 1852.



fied their approbation of the arrival of the troops by the loudest acclamations of joy. I went with ——— to Head Quarters to see his Excellency, General Sir William Howe, but he being gone out, we had some conversation with the officers, who appeared well-disposed towards the peaceable inhabitants, but most bitter against, and determined to pursue to the last extremity the army of the United States.”

Two months later the loyalist temper is sadly changed:

“22d November, the seventh day of the week.— This morning about 10 o'clock, the British set fire to Fair Hill mansion-house, Jonathan Mifflin's, and many others, amounting to eleven, besides outhouses, barns, etc. The reason they assign for this destruction of their friends' property is on account of the Americans firing from these houses, and harassing them frequently. The generality of mankind being governed by their interest, it is reasonable to conclude that men whose property is thus wantonly destroyed under a pretence of depriving their enemy of a means of annoying them on their march, will soon become enemies too. But what is most asto-



nishing is their burning the furniture in some of these houses, belonging to friends of Government. Here is an instance that General Washington's army cannot be accused of. There is not one instance to be produced where they have wantonly burned and destroyed their friends' property. I went to the top of the steeple, and had a prospect of the fires."\*

I have made this incidental allusion to the state of things near and around Mr. Reed's once peaceful home, and now resume the correspondence.

MRS. REED TO MRS. COX.

Norriton, February 23d, 1775.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

Expecting the pleasure of seeing Mr. Cox tomorrow, and wishing to enjoy as much of his company as I can, I take this evening to write to you. I hear he has not immediately left, and therefore do not expect the pleasure of having a line from you. It is now very long since—but I know it is not easily accomplished, especially at this season—

\* MS. Diary.



this season, which used to be long and tedious, has been to me swift, and no sooner come but near gone, not from the pleasure it has brought, but the fears of what is to come, and this on many accounts. Winter is now become the only season of peace and safety. Returning spring will, I fear, bring a return of bloodshed and destruction to our country. That it must do so to this part of it seems unavoidable, and how much of the distress we may feel before we are able to move from it, I can't say. I sometimes fear a great deal. It has already become too dangerous for my dear Mr. Reed to be at home more than a day at a time, and that seldom and uncertain. Indeed, I am easiest when he is from home, as his being here brings danger with it. There are so many disaffected to the cause of this country, that they lie in wait for those who are active in it; but I trust that the same kind presiding Power which has preserved him from the hands of his enemies, will yet do it.\* Indeed, his life has had several remarkable escapes, one of which he was not apprised of, till a few days ago. Our acquaintance ———, who is not apt to be over attentive, having left his son at Germantown, about

\* See Christopher Marshall's Diary, October 4th, 1777.



six weeks after the British troops had left it, wrote down from Lancaster to Mr. Reed, that he was very anxious for his account, and begged the favour of him to ride down and make some enquiries concerning him. His affection and relations to the child, made him undertake it, not without some little fear that the enemy might happen to come out that way—however, he went, found the boy in good health and spirits, wanting only a little hard money to purchase necessaries with. He supplied him and returned safely, but he has learned from some friends since, that the English light-horse were there at the very time. They had loitered at the lower end of the town for some hours, and were at the house he left, not five minutes after his departure. As I know, my dear friend, you have an affection for each person concerned in this story, I will not make an apology for being so particular in the relation of it. . . Mr. Cox is at my side. I finish this morning, and I hope you will give consent to give him up for a little while to the public, who have great hopes and expectations from him. I must say, I hope you will have courage to resign him, especially as his office does not expose him to danger of person, but, I can add no more, as I steal all the



time from Mr. Cox's company, therefore, adieu.—  
Adieu, my love attends you all.\*

I am,

Yours, affectionately,

E. REED.

MRS. REED TO MRS. COX.

(Without date.)

How can I better employ a leisure hour than by writing to my dear friend, to whom I know it always gives pleasure to hear from me. I wrote you a few weeks ago, since which I have not had a word from you; indeed, it adds not a little to the distresses of our days that we cannot mitigate the trouble of being separated from our friends, by a frequent and uninterrupted intercourse, but so it is, and we must submit. In my last I informed you of my situation, and how very low-spirited I was in consequence of it. I wish I could tell you now, that I had regained my spirits, and bore my troubles with a becoming temper of mind, but I confess I find the greatest relief in chasing away all thoughts

\* Colonel Cox was appointed Deputy Quarter-master general to General Greene. His associate was Mr. Reed's brother-in-law, Charles Pettit.



of what is before me. A thousand times I blame myself for my discontent, and yet I am not able wholly to overcome it. The fears of my approaching hour, sometimes so depress me, that my whole fortitude avails me nothing. You will not wonder so much at this, when I tell you that I must be entirely in the hands of strangers, nor know I what assistance to procure. Distressing as my situation is, yet when compared to some others, it is not to be mentioned. Our neighbourhood has lately afforded a scene of trouble, the reflection on which in some degree, silenced my murmurings, and made me thankful, instead of repining that everything is not exactly as I wish. Our neighbour B. Marshall (I don't know whether you know him), died last week of a fever, leaving a widow and three children. I have not yet visited the house of sorrow, but shall, as soon as the weather permits.

During all these eventful scenes—for nearly two years—all correspondence with Mrs. Reed's family in England had been interrupted, the last letter from Mr. De Berdt, being the one sent by Lord Howe in 1776. Among the papers which I have recently been so fortunate as to recover, I find the following from Mr. Reed, which recapitulates the



incidents of that interval, and describes his public and domestic situation.

MR. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Flemington, May 24th, 1778.

DEAR DENNIS,

It is now almost two years since we have heard from you, and you will easily suppose, so long a silence must have been extremely painful to friends, who love and value you so much. I can hardly think but that you must have wrote by some of the circuitous conveyances to this country, but they have not been among the fortunate dispatches which have escaped. You cannot conceive how anxious we are to hear of your health and situation, in these tumultuous times, and beg you would write either to Philadelphia or New York,—if to the former, under cover to John Potts, Esq.,—to the latter, under cover to John Foxcroft, Esq.,—leaving your letter open. It is needless to add, because your own prudence will suggest, that any politics or public occurrences, will be improper. Or perhaps enclosing it, with a few lines to Colonel Patterson, Adjutant-General of the British Army, will be as safe a mode as any. We have met upon public business, since this unhappy



dispute, and from his known politeness, as well as professions, I have no doubt he would forward it to General Washington's head-quarters, where it would find me, or would soon be forwarded to me.\*

You will now, I suppose, be impatient to know how friends so near and dear to you, have fared in a scene so new, as living in the very seat of war. And first of your mother and sister—they are both well, and have preserved their health and spirits most admirably, in such trying times. We have been obliged to move four times; and had our house once plundered by the enemy; but our losses have been much less than could have been supposed, our valuable effects having been chiefly removed in time, or lodged in places of security. We lost a fine little girl near two years old, about a fortnight ago, but your sister made me a present of a fine boy the day before, whom we propose to call after you, so that we shall have something to remind us of you, continually, if we were disposed to forget you, which, I will believe you will hardly suppose to be the case. We have now two boys, and two girls, and are in-

\* Colonel Patterson, was the officer with whom Mr. Reed had the interesting interview in July, 1776, on New York Island, in relation to the correspondence between Lord Howe and General Washington.—(Reed's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 204.)



deed as happy in our family as the times will admit. We have now, to be out of all alarm and danger, got to this place, which is about forty miles from Philadelphia, with the river Delaware between us and the contending armies, where we propose to remain till the situation of affairs, will permit us to return to our old habitation. You will easily suppose that a change from a city to the country, and that, so far back, and without any previous preparations, must have been attended with many wants and inconveniences ; it has so ; but they have been borne with equal patience and fortitude ; and we have found that life may be very comfortable, and even pleasant, without many of those things which we mistakingly call not only comforts but necessities. The self denial and perseverance of the inhabitants of this country, will do them honour at a future day, when the animosity which now subsists is done away. As to myself—having early entered the army I continued in it, and with it till very lately. The summer of 1776, and till spring 1777 I acted as Adjutant-general, but finding that post too fatiguing and irksome, with continual new troops, I resigned it, and was appointed to the command of the horse, which was to be augmented to 3000, but some promotions having been made prejudicial to my claims,



and other circumstances intervening, I did not accept it, but continued with the General all the last campaign, and was in every action of any consequence. I have happily escaped hitherto, though deaths were multiplied around me. I have had two horses killed under me in the course of the war, and the last time (last November), narrowly missed being taken prisoner. Your sister (though she has supported this, as well as everything else, with great firmness), is so much affected at the risk of a military life, that last fall I accepted a seat in Congress, to which I had long been solicited; in which capacity I now am—but as I am again very strongly urged to take the command of the Cavalry, I do not know but I may take the field again this summer—if some measures cannot be taken to stop the effusion of human blood, and if not heal, at least close these wounds which——, I forbear least my resentment should get the better of my prudence, and I should speak disrespectfully of those whom you, or at least the nation to which you belong have invested with power and authority.

I have wrote you frequently by way of France—once by my youngest brother, who went from America a year ago, and of whom I have never heard since—he had direction if he went to England, to



make himself known to you, but I fear some accident has befallen him. The opportunity waits, so that I have only to say one thing more, and then conclude. Your mamma and sister join me in urging you to write by every possible conveyance. We have heard, but in a very distant, indirect mode, that finding it not good to be alone, you had prevailed on some fair one to gild the scene a little, and chase away the solitary cares of the bachelor—but her name, connexions, &c., we have not been able to learn. We should fail in our love and regard to you, if we had not some anxiety in so interesting a scene. Were we sure of it, Hetty would have wrote to the fair unknown at a venture, but defers it till she is in a better condition, and is sure she has such a relation. In the meantime, if it be so, we charge you with our kindest regards and tenderest wishes to her, and beg you both to accept our late, but not less affectionate congratulations.

Adieu—you know my hand.

Yours, most truly and affectionately.

Soon after the date of this letter, intelligence was received from Mr. De Berdt, in a letter brought by Governor Johnstone, one of the British Commissioners of 1778, whose fruitless attempts



at conciliation are well known to the student of history, and have been elsewhere illustrated in detail. Mrs. Reed refers to this introduction in a letter, written about this time, from Flemington to Mrs. Cox.\* One of her infant children had just died of the small-pox.

MRS. REED TO MRS. COX.

Flemington, June 16th, 1778.

“I was intending to sit down and write to you the very time I received your kind, acceptable letter, truly welcome in the sympathizing words of my dear friend,—much do I stand in need of them; the loss I have sustained in my little circle I find sits very heavy upon me, and I find, by experience, how hard a task it is to be resigned. Therefore I must make yet larger demands on you, and beg you will

\* Each one of the Commissioners, except Lord Carlisle, was provided with private letters of introduction to leading Whigs in America. Beside those to Reed, and Laurens, and Morris, Washington received two, which have lately (1853) been published in Mr. Sparks's letters to Washington, one in advance of the commission, from the Rev. Andrew Burnaby, and one from Ex-Governor Eden, introducing his brother William Eden, afterwards Lord Auckland.—Sparks's Letters to Washington, vol. ii. pp. 100, 108.



continue to apply every argument which will tend to make me more perfectly acquiesce in the Divine pleasure, concerning me and mine. Surely my affliction had its aggravation, and I cannot help reflecting on my neglect of my dear lost child. Too thoughtful and attentive to my own situation, I did not take the necessary precaution to prevent that fatal disorder when it was in my power. Surely, my dear friend, I ought to take blame to myself. I would not do it to aggravate my sorrow, but to learn a lesson of humility, and more caution and prudence in future. Would to God I could learn every lesson intended by the stroke. I think sometimes of my loss with composure, acknowledging the wisdom, right, even the kindness of the dispensation. Again I find it overcome me, and strike to the very bottom of my heart, and tell me the work is not yet finished, I've much yet to do; assist me, therefore, my dear friend, with your counsels, and teach me to say, that God does *all* things well. But I will not trespass longer on your friendship, but turn my thoughts and yours to more pleasant scenes, for God has given, as well as taken away, and the loss of one should not make me unmindful of the blessings I have left, and those newly given.

“I am pretty well recovered, but my strength



not so much recruited as usual in the same time. My dear little boy grows very fast; his name is Dennis De Berdt; he has as few complaints as any child of his age I ever saw; my fresh duty to him greatly tends to relieve my thoughts, and divert my too melancholy reflections.\*

“I know it will give you pleasure, my dear friend, to hear that we have late letters from my brother. Governor Johnstone, one of the Commissioners, brought them. They bring the most agreeable tidings from him; he has married a very amiable woman with a large fortune, from whom also both mamma and myself had letters. She was so near lying in, that I suppose his son or daughter is just the age of my child. It seems to have renewed mamma’s spirits exceedingly, and given me double pleasure on that account; they both give her a kind invitation to come to England, which she enjoys very much, though I believe without the thought of accepting. Yet I can easily judge how very pleasing it must be to her. \* \*

“How earnestly do I wish that I could see you; can I have no hope this summer that you will come? must you ever be so crowded with business? For

\* Mr. Reed’s second son, born at Flemington, 12th May, 1778, died at sea on his voyage from Batavia, 6th February, 1805.



myself it is not practicable ; the length of the journey and my incumbrances forbid the thought, but I can't give up the expectation of seeing you here. Yourself and Miss Rachel, if not both at one time, yet separately, might favour me. I am very lonely here : this would induce you for my sake ; that the part of the country is new and would vary the scene for Miss Rachel, might be another motive for her. I think I will be very angry if you disappoint me."

*July 6th.*—"Thus far had I written, as you will see by the date, three weeks ago, and have had no opportunity of sending it to you. I had some doubts whether to send it or write anew, but as my mind is not altered, and still stands in need of your kind and consoling advice, I venture this trespass on your friendship, as I find it the most softening and healing to my heart ; but my grief shall not be now renewed, but stand far off while I congratulate you on the possession of our city once more. You have been to visit it, I hear ; for my part, I do not expect to see it for some time yet ; the cool weather must arrive before I can think of it. I hope when I hear from you, you will tell me who and what you saw, and how your Tory acquaintance behaved. Methinks one would be almost tempted to pity



them. At a distance, I cannot feel much for them, but some particular scenes of separation, I dare say, must be very distressing. I must also congratulate you on our success at Monmouth, and that our state is free from our cruel enemy. You will, I am sure, my dear friend, congratulate me, when I tell you that my dear Mr. Reed was in the action, and had his horse again shot; this is the third time the same circumstance has happened, and himself unhurt.

“ ‘ When all thy mercies, O my God,  
My rising soul surveys;  
Transported with the view, I'm lost  
In wonder, love, and praise.’ ”

The mercy of a kind Providence ought to make me ashamed of my unsubmissive and unresigned temper to my late loss. I will try to act and think properly.

“ As I find you are likely to come to Burlington, I have great hopes of seeing you here; do let me have a line from you; a line, did I say? do not put me off so, but write me a long letter. Do not endeavour to shorten my entertainment; I have very few here to hold conversation with.”

After the evacuation of Philadelphia, some time



in August, the military operations in New Jersey having intervened, Mrs. Reed was enabled, with her family, to return to her home, whence she never again was exiled. During that summer her husband remained in Congress, occasionally visiting Camp as one of a committee of that body; and in December, 1778, was elected President of the Executive Council of the State of Pennsylvania. From this time forward, Mrs. Reed's life was comparatively peaceful—or, at least so far so, that no actual warfare disturbed her home, and that her husband's duties were those which involved no extreme personal hazard. Hers, however, even then, was the duty of sustaining and consoling him in hours of anxiety, to which, in point of intensity, the perils of actual warfare were preferable—the anxiety of civil administration, perplexed and threatened by faction, and the most malignant party spirit. The years 1778 and 1779 were the years of Mr. Reed's public life fullest of cares and heavy responsibilities. I never read the record of them, without the strongest feelings of resentment at the unscrupulous opposition which was directed against him. The pseudo-aristocracy of Philadelphia society—a remnant of proprietary prejudice and actual disloyalty fermenting in the whole mass—seemed bitterly intolerant to



those who were honestly striving to make the republican system work well. It is not easy to realize it, but it is nevertheless true, that a man like Arnold—so gross in his habits, so ruffian-like in his temper, so utterly unprincipled, as the event showed, in every relation—should have been petted and patronised in the patrician circles of Philadelphia—his chief merit seeming to be his inexorable hatred to President Reed and the patriot party; and, indeed, so cherished, that he was able to drag down to the level of his own ultimate degradation one of the most beautiful and accomplished of the Philadelphia high-born ladies. Yet so we know it was. In the height of all this party turmoil, to which the peaceful politics of our own times have no resemblance, Mrs. Reed, in the pure enjoyment of her home circle, was tranquil and contented.

MRS. REED TO MR. DE BERDT.

Philadelphia, September 16th, 1779.

I need not say, my dear brother, that it is with the utmost pleasure that I embrace an opportunity, which I think will be safe and speedy, of once more writing to you. Alas! will these impediments to our affectionate intercourse never be removed?



When I look back to our early life, our days which we spent under the same roof, it gives an additional pain to the present separation; but I will not take up a time so precious as the present in giving a gloomy cast to our situation, since it will bear another aspect, for, after danger's past, how sweet is safety and peace—peace, I mean, as to own dwelling; and we are no longer obliged to leave our houses, or stay there with constant dread and apprehension. These are now past, I hope never to return.

It is now so long since I have heard from you, that I begin to be very anxious to receive some tidings from you and yours. Your dear Mrs. De Berdt and your daughter—are they well? I was going to say, you know not how much I long to see them; but I am sure you do. From the desires and wishes of your own heart you will judge of mine, and express to them, my dear brother, how much they share my love and esteem; for, though strangers yet to their persons, they are not strangers in my heart and affections. My family are all well. Mr. Reed is as much engaged as ever, though in a different and more important station. A thousand circumstances I long to write you, but every part of our life is so entwined with politics, that I must



pass them altogether. Our dear mother is well; her health and spirits are to me both pleasure and wonder. She talks of you more than ever, and I cannot help hoping she will one day have the pleasure of seeing you—that would complete her earthly wishes—and, separate from our own pleasure, how truly should we participate here on such an occasion. I hope nothing has happened to alter your wishes with respect to a voyage. Everything adds to mine. This country must soon be desirable. If peace did but spread her olive on our shores, we might vie with any part of the world, and this, I hope, is not far off. I know your turn of mind so well, that I do not imagine you would be pleased with it at first; but I think after a little time, when some of the pleasures and refinements of London wore off, you would find yourself and family extremely happy here. I dwell upon this prospect and often realize it in my own mind, and enjoy in hope what I trust I shall one day experience. I wrote you, my dear brother, a few months ago, and by the time I thought you had received it, it was brought back to me; but another opportunity offered and it was again sent, though it is to me very doubtful whether it will ever reach you. I hope you will be able to let us hear from you, and when



you write, tell us every particular that relates to your happiness. It will be important to us; for, however long the separation and great the distance, my heart feels all the warmth and tenderness of affection as in our youngest days, and I must ever be truly and sincerely yours,

E. R.

On the 4th of October, 1779, the party feeling in Philadelphia, to which I have referred, broke out in acts of violence and bloodshed. A number of gentlemen of distinguished position, but who had rendered themselves obnoxious to some portions of the popular party, were literally besieged by an armed mob in the house of one of their number, and only escaped with their lives, in consequence of the interposition of the President, who accompanied by a few volunteer cavalry rescued them. This was what is well known in Philadelphia history as the affair of Fort Wilson, the scene of the tumult being the house occupied by Judge Wilson, then at the southwest corner of Third and Walnut Streets. The following hurried note, written from a country-seat near the city, shows the alarm which prevailed everywhere in this worst scene of social strife. It is a note from Mrs. Reed to a friend in town.



Germantown, Wednesday morning, October 5th, 1779.

I would not, my dear sir, take a moment of your time to tell you the distress and anxiety I feel, but only to beg you to let me know in what state things are, and what is likely to be the consequence. I write not to Mr. Reed, because I know he is not in a situation to attend to me at present. Mr. Pettit will lend a servant and a horse to come up here. I conjure you by the friendship you have for Mr. Reed don't leave him.

E. R.

The narrative of these scenes of confusion and perplexity has been elsewhere given, and my private memoir would lose whatever merit its personal character affords, if I were more minutely to illustrate public events. The history of President Reed's administration, with its endurances, its sacrifices, and its results, by-and-bye, when our local story becomes classic, will be full of interest. With the exception of a letter or two from him to his friend, General Greene, never yet published, and which are very interesting, there will be found little further reference to public affairs.



## CHAPTER XVI.

1780.

*Reed's Letter to Greene in February—Birth of Mrs. Reed's youngest son—March of the Philadelphia Troops to Trenton—Mrs. Reed's Letters—Philadelphia Contributions—Lafayette—Correspondence with Washington—Mrs. Reed's last Letters—Correspondence with Greene—Mrs. Reed's Illness and Death—Conclusion.*

My story is hastening to its end, the next year, 1780, being the last of Mrs. Reed's brief and, (let me be excused if the phrase seems an exaggeration,) heroic life. It was a year of deep gloom in public affairs. The following letter gives some glimpse of these perplexities.

REED TO GENERAL GREENE.

Philadelphia, February 14th, 1780.\*

DEAR SIR:

Your favour of the 9th inst. is now before me.

\* This, and an equally interesting letter of a later date, were accidentally omitted in Mr. Reed's Memoir.



I had neither forgot nor neglected my promise when I had the pleasure of seeing you, but was prevented by two reasons:—first, that I really could not find out what was doing at the civil Head-Quarters with sufficient certainty; and secondly, that I expected you daily in town. I am almost afraid to commit to paper my full and undisguised sentiments on the present state of affairs, with which you are so specially connected. So many accidents have, in the course of this war, happened from epistolary freedoms, that I have grown very fearful of trusting anything in so hazardous a channel. However, I will venture to tell you that I think you have nothing to expect from public gratitude or personal attention, and that you will do well to prepare yourself at all points for events. General Mifflin's appointment to his present office, without including the heads of the Department, is a sufficient comment on my text, and by your letter, I find you understand it as I do. I have had some experience of that body with whom your principal concern lay, and am clearly of opinion that more is to be done by resolution and firmness than temporizing. All public bodies seem to me to act in manner, which, if they were individuals, they would be kicked out of company for, and the higher they are, the greater liberties they take. In



my opinion you ought not to delay an explanation on your affairs; if a tub is wanted to the whale you are likely to be it as any. A torrent of abuse was poured on Wadsworth, but that has all died away; as all ill-grounded and unjust calumny ever will. I think he was a valuable officer, and wish they may not feel his loss. Your particular situation will enable you to leave the Department not only without discredit, but your station in the line will preserve a certain respect which in other circumstances might be wanting. Whoever is quartermaster this year must work, if not miracles, at least something very near it, for I verily believe there will not be shillings where pounds are wanted. In all my acquaintance with public affairs, I never saw so complete a mystery—a vigorous campaign to be undertaken, an army of 35,000 men to be raised, fed, &c., and not one single step taken, that I can learn, which will raise our drooping credit, gratify the people, or even conciliate a common confidence. A new arrangement of the army and reduction of officers is now talked of, with as much composure as if it was a common business—little do they know the delicacy and difficulty of such a work. Nothing can rouse us from this lethargy but some signal stroke from the enemy, and I shall not be sorry to



find them set about it; as I am persuaded we are sliding into ruin much faster than we ever rose from its borders. Whatever you do or resolve must be done soon, or you will be plunged into another campaign without any possibility of retreat, and though the circumstance I have above alluded to is a favourable one, it is impossible to envy your situation; for whether you move or stand still, it may be improved to your disadvantage. If you quit they will say, that having made a great fortune you leave the Department in distress, when you could be of most service to your country. If you stand fast you become responsible for measures and events morally impracticable. If an honourable retreat can be affected, it is beyond doubt your wisest and safest course; but I am not certain that this can be done even now, and every hour adds to the difficulty. Your Department, as I have ever told Mr. Pettit, must bear some just censure for the appointments in this state, and they are now used, as I expected they some day would be, to its prejudice. When such men as Hooper, Ross, Mitchell, etc., make such display of fortune, it is impossible to help looking back, and equally impossible for a people, soured by taxes and the continuance of the war, to help fretting; and the general ill-temper gives



great latitude to thought and speech. When things go wrong, no matter where the wrong bias is given every one concerned finds a pleasure in shifting the blame on his neighbours or at least in dividing it. It would never surprise me, therefore, to see a Quartermaster or Commissary-General made the political scapegoat, and carry off the sins, if not of the people, of those who represent them. Upon the whole, I still retain my opinion of the propriety of your being here as soon as possible, and in the meantime can only inform you of two things with certainty:—1st, that the plan of the Department will be altered as to commissions; 2d, that nothing but necessity will induce them to continue the present Department, for though it may have a great deal of the utile, it has little of the dulce in the palate of Congress. But you will be drilled on till the campaign opens, and if they can do no better they may keep you. In this as well as everything else much will be left to the chapter of accidents.

The Confederacy with her cargo of ministers, etc., has met with a severe gale of wind and been obliged to put into Martinique in distress. Our good and great ally has met with a little touch in the West Indies, fourteen merchantmen, part of a fleet bound to Jamaica, and one frigate taken, the rest dispersed



by six of the enemy's ships. No appearance of peace; on the other hand, great preparations for a vigorous campaign both by sea and land. The minister here hints that Great Britain has formed some favourable alliances, but whether this is done to stimulate or from real intelligence I do not know.

Mrs. Reed joins me in kind wishes and compliments to Mrs. Greene, whose important business we learn is happily settled in presenting you with a fine son, of which we give you joy. Mr. Pettit and Mr. Cox, I find, do not agree in opinion as to the plan of your congressional operations, which is another powerful motive for your coming.

But it is time to relieve you from this tedious letter, in which my pen has run away with me, as I intended to have been very prudent and reserved, but I find I have, as we poor mortals are apt to do, made good resolutions and broke them every one.

I am, with very sincere regard and esteem, my dear General,

Your most obedient and

Very humble servant,

J. REED.

In May, 1780, Mrs. Reed's youngest child was



born, and named George Washington;\* and in the summer of that year she, with her little family, resided at a country-house, on the River Schuylkill, a few miles from Philadelphia.† The first division of the French army having arrived in Rhode Island, and a combined movement of the allied troops on New York being contemplated, it was deemed expedient to raise and march to the proposed scene of action a large body of Pennsylvania volunteers. This was done with great spirit, and, resigning his executive authority to the Vice-President, President Reed took the field in person, assembling his raw levies at Trenton, there to await the orders of the Commander-in-Chief. They remained till August, when the French co-operation failing, they were dismissed. To her husband at Camp, the following characteristic letters, almost the last she ever wrote, were sent:

MRS. REED TO MR. REED.

Banks of Schuylkill, August 20th, 1780.

I this moment received yours, my dear friend,

\* For a sketch of his gallant career, see Reed's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 230.

† This place is that now (1853) owned by Miss Burd, just above the Peters's Island Railroad Bridge.



from Bloomsbury. I am very glad to hear our friends there are well. I dare say you were welcome as to yourselves, but perhaps not so with respect to such a number of militia. Mr. Cox's orchards and cornfields may suffer a little, and that I imagine, he cannot put up with very patiently, but perhaps you will be able to keep better discipline than I am aware of.

I have not heard of any letters from the General or any other quarter since you left home. I left directions that all those wrote on public service should be sent to the Council,—the others sent up here, but have not yet received any.

Shall I acknowledge, my dear friend, that I am not so anxious as I ought to be, perhaps, for the second division of the fleet? I judge in that case something of consequence would be attempted, fatal perhaps, in the event, and too much of my happiness is at stake not to make me dread it. If you cannot praise my patriotism, I am sure you can excuse me, at least, and place to the account of my love what is wanting to the cause of my country.

I congratulate you on this agreeable change of weather; it will make your own fatigues, as well as those of your soldiers, much less. This, as well as other circumstances, make one think of Philadelphia



—though it is pleasant here, yet my family is not arranged for two houses. Rogers is our only manservant. Our tenant is very obliging, or we could not possibly stay; he does everything I ask of him. Mr. Pettit [illegible] one of his horses that we are now confined here; but these difficulties will be principally removed in town. I shall therefore return there as soon as possible.

I shall be very anxious to hear from you what your views and expectations are, and how far you move. I have heard it hinted that you will yourself go on to Head-Quarters, if the troops should not be wanted there. Do write me as often as you can; nothing can so much reconcile me to your absence as frequently hearing from you. I must in very great haste tell you that we are all well, and that

I am, with unalterable affection,

Ever yours,

E. REED.

MRS. REED TO MR. REED.

Banks of Schuylkill, August 22d, 1780.

I thank you, my dear friend, for your attention to me in writing so frequently. Nothing can give



greater pleasure, or tend so much to make absence tolerable. Yours, by Mr. Hunter, of the 19th, I received this morning. I am very glad to hear you have a little leisure; it will be a relief to your mind, and add also to your health, and I hope, while you have time, I shall still hear from you as often as you have opportunity. Though I have no reason to say a word to urge you to this, yet I cannot help expressing my wishes and hopes, and the pleasure I have in hearing from you. I think your situation, encamped on the banks of the Delaware, must be very agreeable. If I did not see and know the impropriety of it, I should almost wish to pay you a visit, as you know I have ever had a strong curiosity to see an army in the field; and though yours is small, yet it would gratify my curiosity as much, perhaps, as a large one. But I believe I shall not see it now; I must wait, at least, until the next time. The gentlemen of your family who have never been out before, I suppose think this a very agreeable specimen of the campaign. Dr. Hutchinson, I imagine, has joined you by this time,—to him, as well as to all the gentlemen with whom I am acquainted in your family, I beg my compliments, and my wish that they may find their whole tour of duty as pleasant as this part of it.



I received this morning a letter from the General, and he still continues his opinion that the money in my hands should be laid out in linen; he says no supplies he has at present, or has a prospect of, are any way adequate to the wants of the army; his letter is, I think, a little formal, as if he was hurt by our asking his opinion a second time, and our not following his directions, after desiring to give them. The letter is very complaisant, and I shall now endeavour to get the shirts made as soon as possible. This is another circumstance to urge my return to town, as I can do little towards it here. The masons are about altering the chimney, under the directions of Mr. Matlack; I hope they will be done this week. When we move, I believe we must put Mr. Pettit's horse and our old one together; they will not be a very good match, but they must do.

I am very anxious to know if you have heard from the General since the Committee left Camp. I can't help thinking you will find an alteration when they leave him to his opinion. I confess I felt very sensibly his doubting your zeal or exertions in the cause of your country; neither of these, nor your friendship for him, I think, can at this day be called in question; but his ears have



been open to insinuations, perhaps of designing men, or at least ignorant ones, who have themselves hearkened to those who represent this state able to do more than it really can, and thus answers two purposes,—it takes from the merit of government, and magnifies the exertions of private subscriptions. But I hope you will suspend any decided judgment on the General's conduct until you see him; he may probably explain it to your satisfaction; and remember, my friend, no one is entirely proof against the arts of misrepresentation, or can always act right when those in whom they place confidence make it a point to deceive us, or are themselves deceived.

I intend answering the General's letter to-morrow, which I shall enclose to you. You will have a better opportunity of forwarding it than I shall.

Our dear little children are pretty well. Dennis has been most terribly bit with mosquitoes, which he scratched till they are very sore and troublesome, and it makes him fretful. The chief reason to make me regret leaving this place is on the children's account, who seem to enjoy more pleasure here than in town. However, the weather is now so moderate I think it cannot endanger their health.



Mamma sends her love and best wishes for your safety.

Adieu, my dear friend ; think of me often, and remember with what sincere and tender affection

I am unalterably and truly yours,

E. REED.

On the the 26th, Mr. Reed thus replied, " The affair of the donation will require your attention, or slander will be busy on that score ; the General is so decided, that you have no choice left, so that the sooner you finish the business the better. You will recollect my dear creature, that it will be necessary for you to render a public account of your stewardship in this business, and though you will receive no thanks if you do it well, you will, much blame, should it be otherwise. If it should happen that you do not come up, I have something to mention in writing on this point, but I had rather do it personally, so that I shall defer till I see what you conclude upon. I have received the shirts, &c., and a large bundle of English newspapers, but you do not tell me to whom I am obliged for this communication, or whether I am to return them. I should not be disappointed if the repeated and continued attacks of my enemies should sometimes



meet with partial success. Human nature is not equal to the task of watching and repelling such incessant and implacable malice, but I am grown very callous on these points. I shall do my duty to the best of my ability, and if, after all, prejudices arising from envy, and real, though causeless malignity, prevail, I trust it can only be for a season; the mist will, sooner or later, clear away, but if it should not, I shall always have the satisfaction arising from an approving conscience, of having performed my duty to my country, unbiassed by interest or ambition. It is not unlikely the General has caught the infection in part, for mischief is ever industrious, but he has a good heart, and I believe slow in listening to evil reports. He may have more professing and adulating friends, but he has not a more sincere one in America. He is not in all respects lucky as to those about him, but, being honest himself, he will not readily suspect the virtue of others. I have forwarded your letter to him. I wish you had mentioned the progress you had made in the business, and think you had best occasionally inform him how you go on. Kiss the children for me, and remember me affectionately to your mamma, as well as kindly to all friends. If you have not set up my bed-curtains, I wish you



would take the first opportunity to do it. I have too much pleasure in hearing from you not to desire you to write as frequently as you can, and am, my dear Hetty,

“With unabated and inviolable affection,

“Ever yours,

“J. R.”

Mrs. Reed had, it seems, with the sure instinct of a woman's sagacity, detected something like formality in Washington's correspondence, and suspected an alienation of feeling on her part, from the Pennsylvania authorities. That his conjecture was not altogether groundless, is not improbable. There were busy mischief-makers at work, poisoning the mind of Washington, and striving to excite suspicions against his best and truest friends. The cloud, however, was very transient.\*

“The affair of the donation ” referred to in Mr. Reed's letters, was this, (I copy from what has been already written.) In the spring of 1780, at the period of the greatest distress of the American

\* As a specimen, see letter from General Sullivan to Washington, 1st December, 1780, in Spark's Letters to Washington, Vol. ii. pp. 265 and 280—also Freeman's Journal, 27th March, 1782.



army—when tattered coats, and ragged regimentals, had reached the extremest point of wretchedness, the ladies of Philadelphia united for the purpose of collecting, by voluntary subscription, additional supplies in money and clothes, for the poor soldiers. As early as the 20th of January, Mr. Reed had written to Washington, “The ladies have caught the happy contagion, and in a few days, Mrs. Reed will have the honour of writing to you on the subject. It is expected that she will have a sum equal to £100,000 (currency), to be laid out according to your Excellency’s direction, in such a way as may be thought most honourable and gratifying to the brave old soldiers who have borne so great a share of the burden of this war. I thought it best to mention it in this way to your Excellency for your consideration, as it may tend to forward the benevolent scheme of the donors with despatch. I must observe that the ladies have excepted such articles of necessity as clothing which the States are bound to provide. We have just heard that Mrs. Washington is on the road to this city, so that we shall have the benefit of her advice and assistance here, and if necessary refer afterwards to your Excellency.”

Washington, in a letter which is published in Mr.



Sparks' collection, acknowledged the great value of the proposed contribution, and directed the attention of the ladies of such articles of linen clothing as the soldiery stood in most need of. The efforts of the Philadelphia women were eminently successful. No pains were spared. The city and districts were apportioned among committees, and the result was that in Philadelphia City and County alone, the collections amounted to upwards of \$300,000 paper currency, or according to the existing depreciation, in specie about \$7500. Many of the contributions were made in gold, and all parties seem to have given liberally. It is a curious thing that the fund about this time subscribed by the merchants and others for the creation of a bank, amounted to £315,000, or but about four hundred specie dollars more than was contributed for mere charity by the ladies of this city. Nor were their efforts confined to this neighbourhood; circulars were addressed to adjoining Counties and States. New Jersey and Maryland contributed generously. The following letters taken from my papers are inserted without further comment than to direct attention to the business-like intelligence, and practical good sense which distinguish Mrs. Reed's correspondence on a subject of which as a secluded female she could have had



no previous knowledge. Washington too writes as judiciously on the topic of "soldiers' shirts," as on the plan of a campaign or the subsistence of an army.

ESTHER REED TO WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, July 4th, 1780.

SIR,

The subscription set on foot by the ladies of this city for the use of the soldiery, is so far completed as to induce me to transmit to your Excellency an account of the money I have received, and which, although it has answered our expectations, it does not equal our wishes, but I am persuaded will be received as a proof of our zeal for the great cause of America and our esteem and gratitude for those who so bravely defend it.

The amount of the subscription is 200,580 dollars, and £625 6s. 8d. in specie, which makes in the whole in paper money 300,634 dollars.

The ladies are anxious for the soldiers to receive the benefit of it, and wait your directions how it can best be disposed of. We expect some considerable additions from the country and have also wrote to the other States in hopes the ladies there will adopt



similar plans, to render it more general and beneficial.

With the utmost pleasure I offer any farther attention and care in my power to complete the execution of the design, and shall be happy to accomplish it agreeably to the intention of the donors and your wishes on the subject.

The ladies of my family join me in their respectful compliments and sincerest prayer for your health, safety, and success. I have the honour to be, with the highest respect,

Your obedient humble servant,

E. REED.

The original memoranda and accounts of these contributions, with the names of each committee and contributor, are in my possession. The number of contributors was 1645, thus apportioned: the City 1099; Southwark 152; Northern Liberties 171; Germantown 152; and Bristol 13. All ranks of society seem to have united, from Phillis, the coloured woman, with her humble 7s. 6d., to the Marchioness de Lafayette, who contributed one hundred guineas in specie, and the Countess de Luzerne \$6000 in Continental paper, \$150 in specie.



Lafayette's gentlemanly letter to Mrs. Reed is worth preserving.

THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO MRS. REED.

Head-Quarters, June 25th, 1780.

MADAM,

In admiring the new resolution, in which the fair ones of Philadelphia have taken the lead, I am induced to feel for those American ladies who, being out of the Continent, cannot participate in this patriotic measure. I know of one who, heartily wishing for a personal acquaintance with the ladies of America, would feel particularly happy to be admitted among them on the present occasion. Without presuming to break in upon the rules of your respected Association, may I most humbly present myself as her Ambassador to the confederate ladies, and solicit in her name that Mrs. President be pleased to accept of her offering. With the highest respect, I have the honour to be, Madam,

Your most obedient servant,

LAFAYETTE.\*

\* Let me here record my American admiration,—as a matter of well-reasoned judgment on full and thorough study, of Lafayette, in



## WASHINGTON TO MRS. REED.

Head-Quarters, July 20th, 1780.

An idea has occurred to me, my dear Madam, which if perfectly consistent with the views of the female patriots may perhaps extend the utility of their subscriptions. It is to deposit the amount in the Bank, and receive Bank notes in lieu of it to purchase the articles intended.

This, while serviceable to the Bank and advancing its operations, seems to have no inconvenience to the intentions of the ladies. By uniting the efforts of patriotism, they will reciprocally promote each other, and I should imagine the ladies will have no objection to a union with the gentlemen.

all his relations to my country. There is not a line he ever wrote, or a word he ever uttered, or an act of his whole life, that does not tend to prove him to have been the disinterested friend of America, and her institutions. And yet on the tomb which is erected over him, in the burial ground of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart in Paris, which I saw in 1845, not a word is written of his American honours. If I remember rightly, some doubtful French titles are there inscribed, and close by, over a small gateway, as if in ghastly mockery, is written, "Sepulture de 1306 personnes qui ont péri á la barrière du Trône, depuis le 26 Prairial, an 2, jusqu'au 9 Thermidor suivant."



But I beg, Madam, the suggestion I have taken the liberty to make, may not have the least attention paid to it, if the sentiments of all the fair associates do not perfectly coincide. I have the honour to be, with perfect respect and esteem, Madam,

Your most obedient servant,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

ESTHER REED TO WASHINGTON.

Banks of Schuylkill, July 31st, 1780.

SIR,

Ever since I received your Excellency's favour of the 20th of this month, I have been endeavouring to procure the linen for the use of the soldiers, and it was not till Saturday last I have been able to meet with any fit for the purpose, it being unavoidably delayed so long. I have been informed of some circumstances, which I beg leave to mention, and from which perhaps the necessity for shirts may have ceased; one is the supply of 2000 sent from this State to their line, and the other, that a considerable number is arrived in the French fleet, for the use of the army in general. Together with these, an idea prevails among the ladies, that the soldiers



will not be so much gratified, by bestowing an article to which they are entitled from the public, as in some other method which will convey more fully the idea of a reward for past services, and an incitement to future duty. Those who are of this opinion propose the whole of the money to be changed into hard dollars, and giving each soldier two, to be entirely at his own disposal. This method I hint only, but would not, by any means wish to adopt it or any other, without your full approbation. If it should meet with your concurrence, the State of Pennsylvania will take the linen I have purchased, and, as far as respects their own line, will make up any deficiency of shirts to them, which they suppose will not be many after the fresh supplies are received. If, after all, the necessity for shirts, which, though it may cease, as to the Pennsylvania Troops, may still continue to other parts of the army, the ladies will immediately make up the linen we have, which I think can soon be effected, and forward them to camp, and procure more as soon as possible, having kept in hand the hard money I have received, until I receive your reply.

The circumstances I have mentioned will, I hope, appear a sufficient motive for the ladies postponing the plan your Excellency proposes ; I will not, there-



fore, take up your time in apologising for the delay. I have to acknowledge the receipt of a letter from your Excellency of the 20th, to which I would reply, that if the scheme to give the soldiers hard money should be thought proper, of course, the putting the money I have into the bank, couldn't be done, and I find on inquiry that considerable advantage may be had, by laying out hard money, either in linen or any other article.

I have the honour to be, dear Sir,

With the highest esteem,

Your obedient servant,

E. REED.

Washington, in a letter of the 20th, reiterated his wish that no hard money, but specific supplies of clothing, should be furnished by the fair contributors, and with a note from Mrs. Reed expressing her acquiescence, the correspondence closed. Her last act of life was thus one of public beneficence.

On the 22d August, 1780, are dated probably the last words she ever wrote. They are addressed to the lover of her youth and husband of her genuine and unfaltering affection.



MRS. REED TO MR. REED.

Banks of Schuylkill, August 26th, 1780.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

To-day the news has reached me of the arrival of the second division of the French fleet. It doubtless gives universal satisfaction. What my feelings are on the occasion you will be at no loss to judge, and I will not pain you with describing them. I wish only that you may excuse my weakness with a tenderness that I can expect from no one else. I wonder I have not heard from you since I wrote. It is now near a week and I have not a line. My time passes on heavily when I hear no tidings of you. Are you so much engaged with your great family that you have not had leisure for us;—but very likely there may be a letter in town for me, as I have seen nobody to-day who could bring it to me. Our dear little family are pretty well. Washington has been unwell these two or three days but is better. Denny is very happy and there is seldom a day passes but he talks of you. Do you not sometimes wish to see the circle you have left behind? When you have a little cessation from the great concerns you are engaged in and your thoughts take



their natural bias, I know you think of us, and when you have been embarrassed with difficulties, do you not wish to lose your cares on a bosom that is ever ready to share and relieve all your troubles.

I have not yet moved to town, but intend to be there this week. I delayed a little while in hopes your tour of duty would be short, and you might be able to be with me here some time longer; but that seems now quite out of the question and I shall hasten to town.

I hope I shall hear from you in a day or two and learn what interesting intelligence you have. You can expect nothing from me but family circumstances, and of these I shall continue to inform you because I know how much our welfare contributes to your happiness. Adieu, my dear friend, with the tenderest affection

Your ever faithful

E. REED.

It was on his way homeward, after the dismissal of the troops that President Reed wrote the following letter to his friend Greene. I insert it here at the risk of deranging my merely personal narrative, on account of its peculiar interest and its having been accidentally omitted in the biographical



work to which it properly belongs. It is an earnest and truthful expression of the writer's opinion at a perilous crisis of our public affairs.

REED TO GREENE.

Bloomsbury, September 2d, 1780.

DEAR SIR :

Your obliging favour of the 29th ult., is before me. I had flattered myself with the idea of spending some time with you in Camp, and if my wishes had taken effect, to have served immediately under you. But it is otherwise, and I am now upon my return, having dismissed the militia, collected the stores, and closed my tour. The state of our public affairs now appears so problematical, that I confess myself bewildered and can hardly find a resting place for hope that some convulsion will not give the machine a new bias. Those who trace causes and effects, see nothing in our situation which might not naturally be ascribed to the politics and measures of the summer of 1779, when the prospect of a winter peace evidently pervaded all our public measures, and the landed men thought no risk of national honour or interest too great to turn off



the weight of taxes. To these men, supposing no lurking treachery or wish to fall back to Great Britain, and to their measures we owe our present distress. Hence has arose the absurd system of specific supplies, which in other words is a scheme to carry on the war without money—hence the clamours against public officers, because otherwise these clamours would have fallen elsewhere. Perhaps it may be the crisis of our disorder and we may find our political diseases less fatal than they appear in prospect.

Far from wishing your continuance in the office, I think a suitable exit was much to be desired. You may remember this was my opinion last spring, foreseeing that if the campaign began, retirement would be difficult and disgusting if not impracticable. As events are, perhaps my fears may not be well founded, though the clamour has been considerable. Col. Pickering's success will much govern the event as there will not be wanting some who will impute to you any failure which may happen this summer. But it being now done we must all endeavour to serve the public with as little recollection of past grievances as possible. The changes of sentiment which have taken place in the army with respect to civil government, have for the first time given me apprehensions. I am told that some offi-



cers of considerable rank have pressed the General to assume dictatorial authority. Is it so? Necessity may perhaps plead for such a measure, but certainly such power should be received from other hands. He it is said, treated the proposition in a suitable manner,—*that* necessity has ever been the tyrant's plea, and I prize his judgment and virtue too highly to believe he will contaminate a glorious and honourable life by this fatal mistake; for however Congress may be depreciated as well as their money, they are yet the supreme power of the country and may be much easier appreciated than the public safety and honour after such an event.

Mr. Matthews's conduct both in Philadelphia and at Camp has been very mysterious: as I never gave him any cause of offence his enmity is unpardonable. The conduct and claims made by the Committee have given universal dissatisfaction; they seemed to be intoxicated with their appointment and dealt out their dictates and reprehensions with extraordinary severity and, I think, partiality. It was in the first instance a child of cabal, and their treatment of Pennsylvania was unwarrantably capricious. Gen. Schuyler was in town and conversed fully with me on the subjects of which in a few days they complained they could get no information.



Mr. Mathews spent a week in town and never sought it. I assure you there never was any intention to withhold a correspondence with them, but it required time and information to give them the assurances they required. We could not, after receiving an uncivil letter, humble ourselves to them; and have, as soon as in our power, laid before Congress a full state of our affairs. Nor could they, I am sure, have ventured to treat us as they did, but that they expected the Bank would do everything—that bubble is now sinking to nothing and will prove the weakness and folly of building the supply of an army on the donations of a few generous individuals and the efforts of faction. They have impaired the public cause inexpressibly, and the wisest and best advice that could be given them, and which they ought to have from the highest authority, would be to join their strength and credit to that of the State, and give our money issued for the purposes of supply a free and full credit. I will then as I have told the General, pledge my life and character that the army will not want bread.

This will be delivered you by a worthy friend of mine, Dr. Shrill, with whom you may speak freely and confidentially and any civilities shown him will do me a particular favour.



With every kind wish and the most sincere regard, I remain, dear Sir,

Your very sincere friend and

Obedient humble servant,

JOS. REED.

The scene must now close. Mr. Reed on reaching home found his wife on a bed of fatal illness. Her constitution, enfeebled by her recent confinement, sank under an attack of acute disease, and she breathed her last, her husband, her aged mother, and children, the eldest being eight years of age, watching around her, at Philadelphia, on the 18th of September, 1780. All classes of society testified respect for her memory. Washington knew her well, and has left on record his expression of respectful sorrow.

The Council and Assembly adjourned and attended her funeral in a body. A large number of citizens followed. The howl of faction and party animosity, then more fierce than ever and disturbing the higher circles of social life, was silenced at the sight of the husband bowed down in sorrow over his young wife's grave. To him, it was a blow from which he never recovered, and the rest of his life was darkened by this predominant sorrow



that never had consolation. To watch over his little children was his chief care, amidst the turmoil of public duty and anxieties as to public concerns which had no relief. There is a letter now before me to Mr. De Berdt, written more than a year after Mrs. Reed's death, that tells the tale of corroding domestic sorrow in words of genuine pathos which it is hard even now to read without tears. "I never knew," he says, "how much I loved her till I lost her for ever. I have sought resignation of philosophy and religion. I have endeavoured to reason myself into a proper submission to the Divine Will, but with little success. I must have the aid of time to feel as I ought to feel."\* Mr. Reed went to England in the winter of 1783-4. The scene there was wholly changed. "Neither the country nor my feelings towards it," he wrote to a friend, "are the same, and I wish to return with all convenient expedition to America." He returned to die, having survived his wife little more than four years. Such was life—so varied, so anxious and so brief, in those days of trial.

Mrs. Reed was buried in the Arch Street Presbyterian ground—a spot honoured by the repose of

\* MSS. Letter from Mr. Reed to Mr. De Berdt, Nov. 28, 1781.



many of the great and good of our Philadelphia ancestors, and hence I trust sacred; and over her tomb, situated close to the gate, are written, no doubt by her husband, these words:

In memory of ESTHER, the beloved wife of JOSEPH REED,  
President of this State, who departed this life  
On the 18th of September, A. D. 1780, aged 34 years.  
Reader! If the possession of those virtues of the heart  
Which make life valuable, or those personal endowments which  
Command esteem and love, may claim respectful and affectionate  
Remembrance, venerate the ashes here entombed.  
If to have the cup of temporal blessings dashed  
In the period and station of life in which blessings  
May be best enjoyed, demands our sorrow, drop a tear, and  
Think how slender is that thread on which the joys  
And hopes of life depend.

My little memoir is now concluded. I have tried, as I wrote, to fulfil the pledge of my first pages, and to make it a simple and unambitious narrative. It has been to me a source of pure pleasure, and I do not at all disguise—it would be the worst of affectation to do so—that some of this pleasure has been connected with the proud consciousness that the blood of her of whom I was writing flowed in my veins. Pride in ancestry, honoured in those days of genuine patriotism, is, at least, innocent—



possibly influential in guiding conduct to noble ends and aims. The more the American Revolution is studied, the more minute the revelations of the conduct of its public men, the more rational will be the reverence which we, the men of times far, very far, deteriorated, ought to have for them. I have endeavoured, in this little essay, to shed some light upon Revolutionary domestic life, aside from mere politics, and to show what were the trials and the heroism of the women of those days.



## APPENDIX.

### AMERICAN LAW STUDENTS IN ENGLAND.

Through the kindness of Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer, when Minister to this country, and of some professional friends in London, I have been enabled to procure partial lists of the Americans, who, before, and during the Revolutionary War, completed their professional studies in Great Britain. I regret very much that, owing to the enormous office charges at the Middle Temple, whither the largest number of Americans resorted, among them, my own ancestor, I have been prevented from obtaining its list. These charges, the Benchers have not felt at liberty to relinquish. Amongst those who studied at the Middle Temple, and who subsequently attained eminence at the Bar of Philadelphia, were Joseph Reed, Nicholas Waln, Edward Tilghman, Jared Ingersoll, and William Rawle.

#### STUDENTS AT THE INNER TEMPLE, 1760 TO 1785.

1. Philip Alexander, of Virginia, . . . 20th December, 1760.
2. William Paca, of Maryland, . . . 14th January, 1762.  
(Mr. Paca was a signer of the Declaration of Independence.)
3. Alexander White, of Virginia, . . . 15th January, 1762.
4. Edmund Key, of Maryland, . . . 24th June, 1762.
5. Lewis Barwell, of Virginia, . . . 22d March, 1765.
6. William Cooke, of Maryland, . . . 20th July, 1768.
7. James Lloyd Rodgers, of Maryland, . 20th July, 1768.
8. John Peronneau, of Carolina, . . . 2d April, 1772.
9. Kean Osborne, of America (*sic*), . . 27th November, 1772.



10. John W. Irwin, of America, . . . 2d December, 1772.
11. Gibbes W. Jordan, of America, . . . 27th August, 1773.
12. St. George Tucker, of America, . . . 19th November, 1773.
13. James McKealy, of America, . . . 19th November, 1775.
14. William Houston, of Georgia, . . . 1st July, 1776.
15. Francis Corbin, of Virginia, . . . 23d January, 1777.
16. Daniel Leonard, of America, . . . 5th June, 1777.
17. William Robert Hay, of America, . . . 2d May, 1781.
18. George Tyson, of America, . . . 6th June, 1781.
19. John Kelsall, of America, . . . 27th June, 1783.
20. Francis Rush Clark, of America, . . . 5th November, 1783.
21. Carter Braxton, of America, . . . 3d December, 1783.
22. James Robertson, of America, . . . 18th December, 1783.
23. Richard Foster Clark, of America, . . . 4th November, 1785.
24. John Wentworth, of America, . . . 11th February, 1785.

## LINCOLN'S INN.

1. Philip Livingston, Jr., of New York, . . . 30th September, 1761.  
(A signer of the Declaration of Independence.)
2. Arthur Lee, M.D., F.R.S., of Virginia. 1st March, 1770.
3. William Vassall, of Boston, . . . 24th November, 1773.
4. Francis Kinlock, of South Carolina, . . . 14th March, 1774.
5. William Walton, of South Carolina, . . . 25th January, 1775.
6. John Stuart, of South Carolina, . . . 17th May, 1775.
7. Peter Markoe, of Philadelphia, . . . 29th May, 1775.
8. Benjamin Lovell, of Boston, . . . 3d May, 1776.
9. Robert Williams, of South Carolina, . . . 1st April, 1777.
10. Gabriel Manigault, of South Carolina, . . . 12th August, 1777.
11. Clement Cooke Clarke, of New York, . . . 25th August, 1778.
12. Alexander Garden, of South Carolina, . . . 11th January, 1779.
13. Richard Henderson, of Maryland, . . . 18th January, 1781.
14. Neil Jamieson, of New York, . . . 21st September, 1782.
15. Thomas Bee, of South Carolina, . . . 18th December, 1782.







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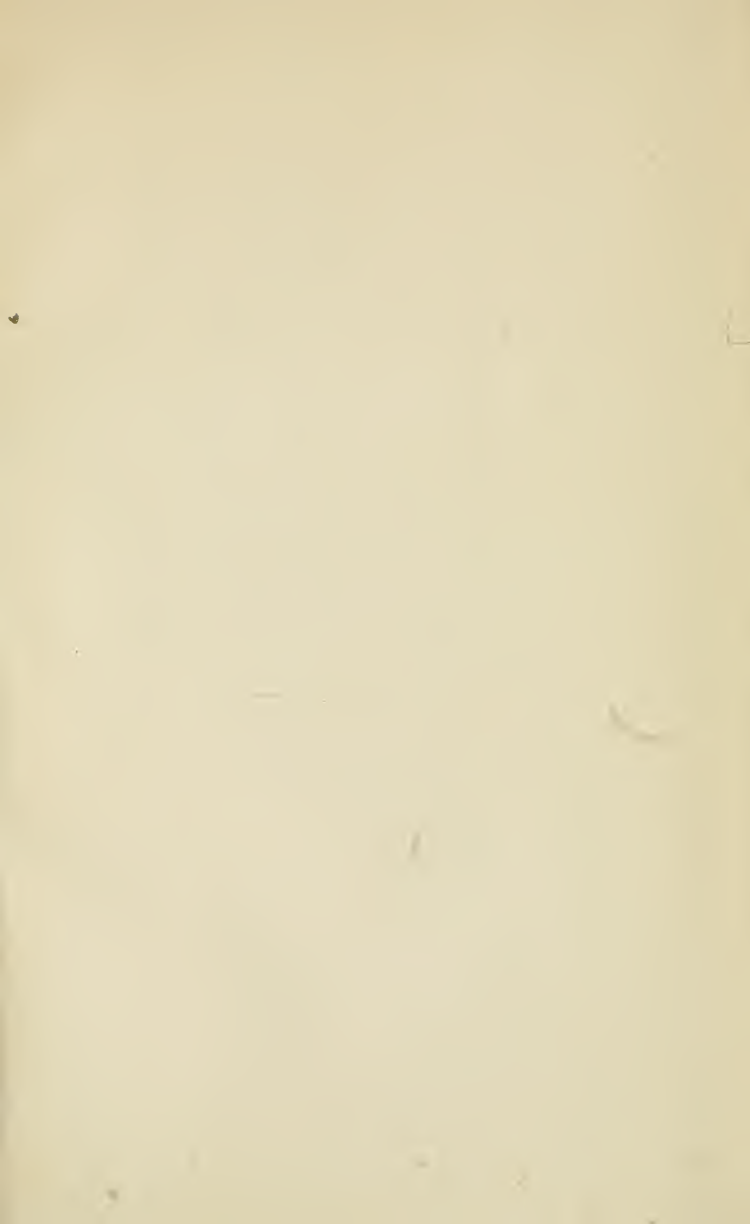
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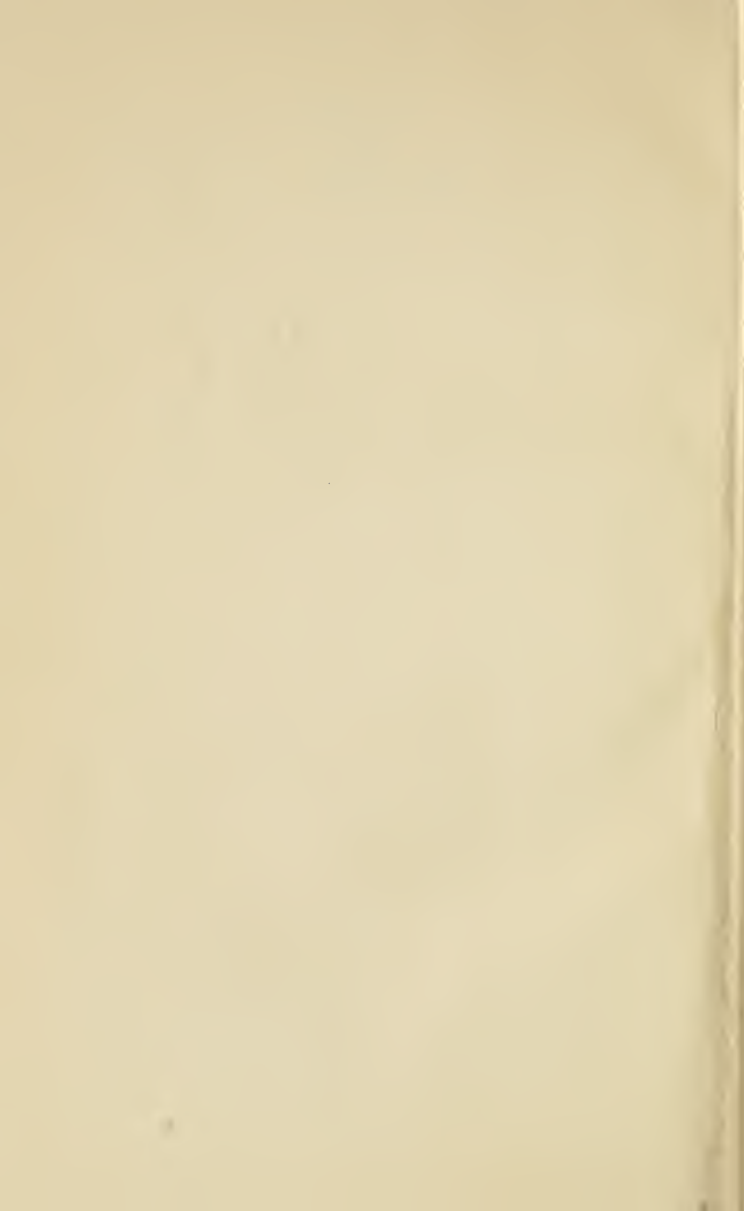
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